

THE
Christian Oratory
OR, THE
DEVOTION
OF THE
CLOSET
DISPLAY'D.

By BENJAMIN BENNET. *K*

The THIRD EDITION.

LUKE VI. 12.

*And it came to pass in those Days that he went out
into a Mountain to pray, and continued in the
Oratory of GOD.*

LONDON:

Printed for JOHN GRAY, at the Cross-Keys in the
Poultry, near Cheapside.

MDCCLXXXII.

CHURCH OF THE
DEVOTION
OF THE
CLOSE



BY BENJAMIN

and it is to be noted that the
into a number of parts and in the
OF GOD

LONDON

Printed by J. G. & Co. of the City of London

MOORE



THE PREFACE.

Having so far exceeded all due Bounds in this Work, I shall not add to the Fault by a large Preface. The Head of Meditation, particularly, is drawn out so long, as will scarce admit of any Apology; and 'tis probable, this is not the only Thing the Critick will censure in it: However, the various Subjects treated of, may be entertaining to some, and what is said upon them, may pass, at least, as practical Discourses, I hope not wholly without Instruction, if not as Specimens proper to my Purpose. And if the Reader think fit to pass over the several Specimens in perusing the Book (only turning to them as he has Occasion, and for his Assistance, if he attempt any thing in the same way) he will have the Discourse in a
A 2 closer

THE PREFACE.

closer Connection, and the whole Design in a clearer View.

I reckon it to little Purpose to acquaint the Reader with the Occasion and Motives of this Undertaking, to profess my own good Designs, bespeak his Candour and Acceptance. It would argue Stupidity not to be concern'd about Success; but I know not that this would be a Means of securing it: That Affair ought to be left in an higher Hand. Indeed Mens Tastes are so different, and as much in Matters of Devotion as any thing else, that I can't expect what is here offer'd will please every Body. If it be acceptable and useful to a Few; ingage them in more solemn Devotion in their Oratories, than they have hitherto attended; promote their Acquaintance with God and themselves, and their Fitness for Heaven, I shall not think my Labour lost.

*I am sensible we have great Plenty of Books of Devotion, and many of them truly valuable; and I am far from thinking that he who adds to the Number, must so much as pretend to excell all that have gone before him: I am sure I make no such Pretence. But different Genius's, Capacities and Turns of Mind ought to be accommodated. The great Variety there is in the Works both of Nature and Art, is an Argument of the
Wisdom*

THE PREFACE.

Wisdom and Goodness of Providence, thereby supplying the Inclinations and Occasions of all Sorts. Some may think the Method of Devotion here prescribed impertinent or impracticable, calculated for a Kind of Utopian Religion; to others it may be more acceptable and profitable; and in a Matter of such high Importance as Religion and Devotion, any little Improvement is well worth endeavouring.

What I have chiefly proposed to myself, is to enlarge the Method of Devotion; to carry it through more Particulars than is usual; and accordingly I have chiefly insisted upon those Branches of Devotion that are less known, and are generally omitted in Books of Devotion; as the Manner of reading Scriptures, as a Part of Worship; Meditation, stated and occasional; Psalmody, &c. aiming to furnish the Christian with a more complete Plan and Scheme of Closet Religion. And whatever Defects some may find, and others make in the Performance, I am satisfied I cannot be said actum agere, to do what has been often done before, and build on others Foundations.

As I have touch'd a great Number of Subjects, and spoke with Freedom on some of them, no doubt several things will occur, not suited to every one's Gust, and that may offend

THE PREFACE.

offend Men of narrow, rigid Principles, the Slaves of their respective Hypotheses: But methinks it would be a reasonable Request to such Persons, would they bear any but themselves, and look upon any Face with Temper that wants their Complexion, that they would not cast away the good with the bad, and for the Sake of a few obnoxious Passages, that happen not to agree with their Sentiments, to condemn the whole Treatise, and refuse the Assistance it might afford them, in Things they themselves allow.

Besides, the Exceptions that may be taken to particular, incidental Passages by the Opinionative, I expect the Whole will be distasteful to some; such I mean, who notwithstanding they keep a Sort of a distant Station in the Christian Church, yet are so far from the true Spirit of Christianity, that they are at Enmity with its Principles, Rules and Practice, looking upon every thing that is serious as a Sort of Enthusiasm and Cant. But these are not the Persons to whom I am addressing; nor can I invite them hither, having no Entertainment for them. They have too fine a Taste even to relish the Bible, and too much Wit, as they think, to learn of infinite Wisdom; and 'tis easy to foresee what Censure they will pass, out of their Chair, upon such Books as these.


The

THE PREFACE.

The Nature of this Work manifestly points out the Persons for whose Service it is intended, viz. Christians; and these not in Name only, that take up with a Form of Godliness, denying the Power: Nor Christians of the lowest Form, of a Laodicean Spirit, that have scarce Zeal enough to carry them daily into their Oratories; and with them the Things that remain are ready to die: But true Christians, and Christians of some Attainments and Warmth in Religion, that are under the Influence and Authority of it; that believe and live for Eternity, and think nothing of Importance that terminates in the present World; that are labouring, whether present or absent, to be accepted of God; whom no State of Things much moves, so they may finish their Course with Joy; that are so far from making a Jest of Communion and Intercourse with God, that they attend the Thing as their chief Solace and highest Enjoyment, triumphing therein more than in all Riches, and the peculiar Treasure of Kings and Provinces. These are the Persons to whose Service the following Essay is devoted, and with whom chiefly I expect any good Reception; and with them I leave it, waiting for the Blessing of Heaven, to which I recommend it and them.

BOOKS

BOOKS written by the Rev. Mr. BEN-
JAMIN BENNET, and Printed for
JOHN GRAY.

I.  HE Second Part of the Christian Oratory; Or
the Extraordinary Devotion of the Closet Dis-
play'd, 8vo. Price 4 s.

II. The Truth, Inspiration and Usefulness of the Scrip-
ture Asserted and Proved. In several Discourses on 2 Tim.
iii. 16. 8vo. Price 4 s. 6 d.

NB. *The Authority of the Sacred Writings is plainly demon-
strated in these Discourses, which are designed for the Benefit of
all; but more particularly of those who have not Leisure or Capa-
city to read the more elaborate Treatises on this Subject.*

III. A Defence of the Memorial of the Reformation a-
gainst the Exceptions of *Presbyterian Prejudice displayed, by
an hearty Well-wisher of the Established Church*: With a par-
ticular Inquiry into the Authors and Abettors of the *Irish
Massacre*: A Vindication of Mr. *Baxter* and others, with
Reference to the Story of the Marquis of *Antrim* against the
Accusations of Mr. *Thomas Cart* of the *Bath*, in his *Irish
Massacre set in a clear Light*; And a Detection of the For-
geries published by Dr. *Hollingworth* concerning Mr. *Hen-
derson's* Recantation, and Character of King *Charles* on his
Death-Bed, 8vo. Price 2 s. 6 d.

IV. Occasional Hymns, chiefly for the Lord's Day and
Lord's Table. Being a Collection of others. With an Ad-
dition of new Hymns, 12mo.





THE INTRODUCTION.

The Subject of the Discourse proposed and explained. Of the Jewish Proseuchæ, or Prayer-Houses; whether distinct from Synagogues. How Christ was employed in the Prayer-House, where he continued all Night (viz.) in Prayer, Meditation, &c. What Occasion he had for such Exercises.



It will be granted by all sensible experienc'd Christians, that there's nothing tends more to preserve Religion in its Life and Vigour, than a steady and regular Discharge of the Duties of the Closet. *Apostacy*, says a pious and excellent Divine, *begins at the Closet-Door*; for which Reason I have determin'd to consider the Subject of Closet-Religion, distinctly and at large; that I may afford you the best Assistance I can in so important an Affair. I shall

B

ground

Luke vi.
12. ground my Discourse on that Text, *And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.*

Ver. 2. In the beginning of this Chapter, you find our blessed Lord vindicating first his Disciples, and then himself, against the Cavils of the *Pharisees*; who it seems accused both him and them, as Profaners of the Sabbath: *Why do ye, say they, that which is not lawful on the Sabbath-day?* and again, *The Pharisees watched him whether he would heal on the Sabbath-day.* They thought *Christ* and his *Apostles* not strict enough in their regard to the external rest of the Sabbath, taking a greater liberty than *Moses's* Law, or at least, than their own Laws and Canons allowed. *Christ* first answers and silences his Accusers, and then proceeds in the work of his Office. In the 13th Verse he chuseth and sendeth forth his twelve *Apostles*, and the Text tells you with what Solemnity he addressed himself to that Work, introducing it by a Night's extraordinary Devotion: *He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.* Where observe

1st, The Place he retired to, *a Mountain*, and more particularly an *Oratory*, or House of Prayer. He continued all Night *ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ τῷ Θεῷ*. We render it *in Prayer to God*; but if we take the word *προσευχῇ* for Prayer, it will be literally thus: He continued all Night *in Prayer of God*; which, as it is not *Sense* in *English*, so the ^a Criticks will scarce allow, I presume, that the *Greek* admits of the other Translation, *Prayer to God*. And therefore some have thought that the *Prof-eucha*

^a *Beza* renders it *pernoctaret illic orans Deum*; but acknowledges he is forced to depart from the *Greek*, *ut planius loqueretur*.

eucha does not signify the Duty, but the Place of Prayer, viz. an *Oratory*. And that thus it signifies in our Text, Dr. *Whitby* infers from the use of parallel Phrases: "As the Mountain of God, says he, the Bread of God, the Lamp of God, the Altar of God, the Sacrifice and Table of God, &c. are all Things consecrated and appointed to the Service of God; so *Προσευχὴ τῷ Θεῷ* must in all reason be a House of Prayer to God." He adds, "So the word is certainly used, *Acts* xvi. 13. and by *Philo* in his Oration against *Flaccus*, where he complains that their αἱ Προσευχαὶ were pulled down, and that there was no Place left, in which they might worship God, or pray for *Cæsar*."

That the *Jews* had *Proseuchæ*, or Houses of Prayer, distinct from Synagogues, and before there were any Synagogues among them, several learned Men have endeavoured to prove, particularly Mr. *Joseph Mede*, and lately Dr. *Prideaux*, &c. Of this Nature they suppose the Sanctuary of the Lord to be, mentioned *Josh.* xxiv. 26. and the Synagogues, *Psal.* lxxiv. 8. *They have burnt up all the Synagogues of God in the land*, i. e. all the Places of religious Assemblies (*Col Moadhe El.*) understanding thereby the *Proseuchæ* or Prayer-Houses; there being no Synagogues strictly so called, as is generally suppos'd, 'till after the *Babylonish* Captivity.

Dr. *Prideaux* gives this brief Account of these Prayer-Houses.

^b The chief Place, says he, where the *Israelites* *Connect.* assembled for the Worship of God, was the Tem- ^{Part I.}

B 2

ple ^{P. 357.}

^b What this Author and others have said about the *Proseuchæ*, being mostly borrowed from Mr. *Mede*, I shall give the Reader

The INTRODUCTION.

ple at *Jerusalem*, and, before the Temple was built, the Tabernacle, in both of which there was an open Court before the Altar, in which the People met to offer up their Prayers to God; but those that

Reader some of his Thoughts on the Subject, in his *Dia-tribe* on *Josb* xxiv. 26. And *Joshua* took a great stone, and set it up there (in *Sechem*) under an oak, which was by the sanctuary of the Lord; where he contends, the Sanctuary of the Lord is not the Tabernacle, but one of these Prayer-Houses, which the *Israelites* (those of *Epbraim*) had erected in that very Place, where God first appeared to *Abraham*, and where he built his first Altar after he came into the Land of *Canaan*. The *Jews* had indeed but one Altar and Place of Sacrifice (that which the Lord should chuse to place the Ark of his Covenant there) but yet they had other Places for Devotion and religious Use; and that this Sanctuary at *Shechem* was not a Place of Sacrifice but Prayer, he endeavours to prove from these Reasons.

First, Because it is incredible that the *Israelites*, having but one Tabernacle or Temple for the whole Nation, at which the Males only were bound to appear but thrice in a Year, should have no other Place of Prayer nearer their Dwellings; the Tabernacle or Temple being at least an hundred Miles distant from some of 'em: (He means Places of publick Prayer, for in secret, no question, they might pray where they pleas'd.)

Secondly, It could not be the Tabernacle, which was then at *Shiloh*, but not at *Shechem*, and yet must have some fix'd Place, because the Situation of the Oak is design'd by it.

Thirdly, It could not be the Tabernacle, because it was forbid expressly in the Law, *Deut.* xvi. 21. to plant a Grove of any Trees near to the Altar of God, or to set a Pillar; whereas here are both, an Oak, or *Quercetum*, by the Sanctuary of God, and a Pillar or Sanctuary erected under it. Therefore

Fourthly, He concludes this Place must be a *Proseucha*, because of the Circumstance of Trees growing by it, unlawful as to the Tabernacle, but a characteristical Note of a *Proseucha*, which seems to have been ordinarily beset with them. He observes that *Juvenal* mentions this *Proseucha* or Prayer-House among the *Jews*,

Æde ubi consistas, in qua te quæro Proseucha. Sat. 3.

and

that liv'd at a Distance from the Tabernacle, and afterwards from the Temple, built Courts like those at the Temple and Tabernacle; and there offered their Prayers, which adds he, in after-times

B 3

we

and thinks he finds it twice in the New Testament; in our Text, and *Acts* xvi. 13. where it is said, being come to *Philippi* in *Macedonia*, on the Sabbath-day, they went out of the City to a River-side οὗ ἐνομιζέτο Προσεύχειν *we* render it, *where Prayer was wont to be made*; but other Versions, as the *Syriac* and *Arabic*, because there was an House of Prayer, οὗ ἐνομιζέτο where it was fam'd or reported there was a *Proseucha* or Prayer-House; and therefore the Apostle, expecting an Assembly, resorts thither to teach. The Form of the *Proseucha*, and its Difference from Synagogues, he represents thus. The *Proseucha* was a Plot of Ground encompass'd with a Wall, or some other like Mound or Inclosure, and open above much like to our Courts: The Use properly for Prayer, as the Name imports. A Synagogue was *Ædificium tectum*, like our Houses or Churches, where the Law and Prophets were read, *Acts* xv. 21. Synagogues were in the Cities, as the *Proseuchæ* were without in the Fields, a Sort of disjoin'd Courts to the Temple, whither the People turned themselves when here they prayed. Dr. *Prideaux* thinks, they were not only *without* the City, but mostly *in high Places*; that which our Saviour prayed in being on a Mountain. He adds, In Synagogues the Prayers were offered up in publick Forms, in common for the whole Congregation, but in the *Proseuchæ* they prayed as in the Temple, every one apart for himself, and so our Saviour prayed in the *Proseucha* he went into. But after all, the Proof is not so strong in favour of this Notion, but it yet remains a Question with some, whether there were *Proseuchæ*'s distinct from Synagogues. Dr. *Prideaux* grants, that in our Saviour's Time Synagogues were called *Proseuchæ*; and for that famous Text, *Josh.* xxiv. which Mr. *Mede* lays so much Stress upon, the learned Bishop *Patrick* will not allow his Reasoning upon it; but thinks it likely that *Josbua*, who was the supreme Governor of God's People, being old and infirm, caus'd the Ark at this Time to be brought to *Shechem*, being near to him: And whereas Mr. *Mede* urges the Prohibition, *Deut.* xvi. 21, 22. of planting Trees near God's Altar: He answers, this does not make it unlawful to
set

The INTRODUCTION.

we find call'd by the name of *Proseucha* or Prayer-Houses. He takes notice wherein they differed from Synagogues, particularly in the Uses they serv'd for, in their Form, as also their Situation; Synagogues being within Cities or Towns, whereas these Oratories were without, and mostly, in high Places. Hence 'tis said in the Text, *Our Saviour went up into a mountain to pray*, and continued in an Oratory, viz. there erected.

2^{dly}, The Work *he retired for*, he went into a Mountain *to pray*; not that it's necessary to suppose he confin'd himself to the Duty of Prayer. He was enter'd upon his publick Ministry, had sufficient Experience of the Malice of his Enemies, a full Prospect of the Opposition he must still expect from the World: He was sending forth his Disciples to preach his Doctrine, and foresaw the
Difficulties

set up the Sanctuary under a Tree, that had been planted before, especially when it was done only for a short time, and not to make it the Place of its constant Abode. But I have gone too far, it may be, in these Speculations, which will be thought foreign to the Design of a Practical Discourse; however, what has been said may not be unacceptable to some, and by putting it into the Margin, I have thrown it out of the Way of those, who think themselves unconcern'd with such Matters. Whether the *Proseucha* in the Text was a Synagogue, or a House of Devotion distinct from it, is of little Importance: It is enough for my Purpose, if it signify a *Place of Prayer*, (and thus I have taken the liberty to understand it) which our Lord had Recourse to, not from any Opinion of its Sanctity or Holiness, but purely for its Conveniency, it being, as was said, near to him, and a Place of Secrecy and Retirement. At other times we find him praying in a (Common) solitary Place, *Mark* i. 35. and in a Wilderness, *Luke* v. 16. Nor can it be pretended that these *Proseucha*, or Oratories, were *holy* in the same Sense as the Tabernacle and Temple were, being never sanctified by the *Shechinah*, or glorious Manifestation of God.

Difficulties they were to struggle with. Now 'tis probable, that when he retired, it was not merely for Prayer, but for Reflection, Meditation, and other religious Exercises. He would, no question, on these Occasions, when he made such solemn Pauses, look back on what was past, and forward to what was yet to come; to the remaining Stages of his Life, and to the awful concluding Tragedy of it; thereby confirming his Resolutions, and refreshing his Mind with such Considerations as were proper for that Purpose. There was a *Joy set before him*, the Contemplation of which help'd him to endure the Cross, and despise the Shame; and 'tis like, on these Occasions, he would *set it before himself* with all suitable Advantage. Heb. xii. 2.

If it be said, that this Text, and other parallel Scriptures speak only of his retiring to pray: I answer, that might be the *chief thing* he retired for, and therefore only mentioned, tho' other Work be not excluded. It's said of *Peter*, that he went up to the House-top at the third Hour *to pray*, Acts x. 9. but one can scarce imagine, considering how much Zeal the *Jews* had for their Law, and that the Spirit of God has left it, as the distinguishing Character of the pious and devout amongst them, *That they meditate therein day and night*, that such a Person as *Peter* should employ no time in Reading, Meditation, and the like, at the stated Seasons of his Devotion. So that the whole Duty perform'd on these Occasions, seems express'd by the more considerable and constant Branch of it; and in the same Latitude we may understand what is here said of our Saviour, that he went into a Mountain to pray, *i. e.* to pray, meditate, &c. Psalm. i. 2.

If any ask, what Occasion had Christ for Prayer, and other Exercises of that Kind, since *all fut-*

Col. ii. 9. *ness dwelt in him, yea, the fulness of the Godhead*
bodily, since he was anointed by the Holy Ghost
 Heb. i. 9. *above his Fellows, and receiv'd the Spirit without*
 John iii. *Measure, was always holy, harmless, perfectly so;*
 34. *a Lamb without Spot, never having any disorderly*
Passion, or Corruption to conflict with; in short,
since his human Nature was preserved from all
Taint and Defilement, and from every sinful In-
firmity; was united with the Godhead, and fill'd
with the Spirit: Whence was it then that we find
him so often employ'd, like one of us, in Suppli-
cation, Prayer, Reflection, &c. entring into
his Oratory, and continuing all Night there? I
answer,

1. He might have a special Regard therein to our Instruction, designing to *leave us an Example that we should follow his Steps*; for whatever his own Occasions were, he knew ours to be such as would require frequent Retirement, and therefore he thought fit to recommend the Duty to us by his own Practice.

2. He might do it as an Act of Homage to God, and an Acknowledgment of his Dependance on his heavenly Father. As Man he was God's Creatute, and as Mediator the Father's Servant, subordinate, and subject to him in all Things. 'Tis granted *all Fulness dwelt in him, but it pleased the Father* it should be so. He had the Spirit without Measure, *but God gave it him.* The Father sent him, seal'd him, commission'd him, and he himself owns that he came down from Heaven to do the Father's Will. Now, on this Account, Prayer, Praise, and other Acts of Devotion, were most becoming his Condition and Circumstances, and a proper Means of expressing his Dependance, Resignation to the Father's Will, and Subjection in the Capacity of a Mediator.

3. Nor

3. Not can I suppose but he found need of such Employment as this, *even on his own account*. Not only the Greek Fathers, but many others have suppos'd that the Divinity of Christ was *quiescent* (i. e. did not exert and shew itself) both during his private Life, and during the whole State of his Humiliation. He had indeed always necessary Supports from the Divinity, and after the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon him, at his Inauguration, he always had the Spirit with him in an extraordinary manner; was never left to any Mistakes, nor had any Inabilities, as was the Case sometimes of all other Prophets, even the greatest of them: And yet it is evident the human Nature was left to feel the Difficulties of his Work; to bear, not only the common Infirmities of Hunger, Thirst, Weariness, and to endure the Contradiction of Sinners, but the fiercest and most malicious Assaults of Devils. How sensibly does he complain in some of his Conflicts, particularly in the Garden? *My soul is exceeding sorrowful, and sore amazed*. Nay, so great was his Pressure, that an Angel from Heaven was sent to strengthen him. On which Occasions 'tis supposed the Divinity *suspended its Influence on purpose*, that the Soul as well as Body might taste of his Sufferings, and drink of the bitter Cup that was appointed him.

Now this being the State of Things with our blessed Lord, it is easy to discern how seasonable, and even necessary, such Employment, as I've mention'd, wou'd be to him. In his Agony the Evangelist tells us, *he prayed more earnestly*, with more Intensity and Vigour of Mind; his Burden then lay with greater Weight upon him, and this excited a more than common Importunity. Nor was it only on this extraordinary

Mat. xxvi.

32.

Mark xiv.]

33.

Luke xxii.

43.

'Εκτενέ-

ς προσευ-

The INTRODUCTION.

nary Occasion that he prayed, and prayed earnestly, (tho' now more earnestly than usual) but it seems to have been his Practice, as the Apostle intimates, when he says, that in the Days of his Flesh he offered up Prayers and Supplications, Heb. v. 9. *with strong crying and tears. In the days of his flesh, i. e. throughout his State of Humiliation.* He Isa. liii. 3. *was a man of sorrows, and a Man of Prayer; and indeed being the one, it was necessary he should be the other.* We may observe,

3. His Continuance in the Duty, viz. *all Night.* 'Tis indeed only said, that he continued all Night in the *Proseucha* or Oratory; but it is implied, that he continued for the Purposes I have mentioned, *i. e.* for Prayer, Praise and Contemplation. The Case, in short, I take to be this: Our blessed Lord having been publickly engaged in the Business of his Office through the Day; preaching, working Miracles, answering the Cavils of his Enemies against himself, his Doctrine, and Disciples, he retires at Night, and for his greater Convenience, goes to one of the *Jewish Houses* of Worship, that stood on an Hill hard by, and there pass'd the Night in Prayer and other Work, solacing himself in the Presence of his heavenly Father. From whence I shall take Occasion to press upon you the like Practice. I need only suppose, that herein Christ was our Example, and design'd to be so, and that what he did infers an Obligation upon us to do the like, which will be afterwards further consider'd and prov'd; and then this will be allow'd a just Deduction from the Words, viz.

That the Disciples and Followers of the Lord Jesus are oblig'd, after the Example of their great Master, to have their Times of Retirement from the World, when they are to enter into their Proseuchæ,
their

The INTRODUCTION.

II

their Oratories or Closets, and there converse with God.

In enlarging upon this Subject I shall,

I. Say something concerning the Christian Oratory, or Place of Retirement.

II. I shall give an Account of the Work and Business we have to do when we retire.

III. I shall take Notice of the proper times of Retirement.

IV. Shew the Obligations that lye on Christians, after the Example of their Lord and Master, to retire and converse with God in their Oratories.



CHAP.



CHAP. I.

Of the Christian Oratory, or Place of Retirement.

Concerning which, let me observe,

I. **T**HAT we should make Choice of the most secret Place we can. *Partly* to avoid Ostentation, and all Suspicion of it: Hence that of our Saviour, Matth. vi. 6. *When thou prayest, enter into thy Closet.* The Word ^a signifies an inward, or retir'd Apartment: Having tax'd the Pride and Vanity of the Scribes and Pharisees in their Prayers, he advises his Disciples to be as private as possible in their Devotions, to enter into the Closet, and having shut to the Door, pray to their Father that sees in secret. We should act in our Retirement with a single Eye to God, and whatsoever we do, do it heartily, *as to the Lord*, and not unto Man. So far as we are influenc'd by the lower Considerations of human Approbation and Applause, so far Religion is destroyed, and lost out of our Services.

^a Ταμειον, *Penetrable*, a Recess, a withdrawn, retired Part of a Place, hence *Penetrable Sacrificium*, is that which was wont to be offer'd in *interiore parte Sacrarum*; and *Cicero* speaks of *Dii penetrales* in the same Sense, and *Basil* of Ταμειον Ψυχης, *intimi Recessus Animi*.

vices. Let us therefore guard ourselves against all carnal Views; a Tincture of Pride and Vain-glory in our secret Devotions, will make them like the dead Fly in the Ointment of the Apothecary, to send forth a stinking Smell.

Partly, as such a Privacy will better suit some Circumstances of our Duty, and be more convenient for the Management of our Work. The Use of the Voice with Prostration, may sometimes be of Advantage. Our Saviour fell on his Face in the Garden, as did *Moses* and *Aaron*,^{41.} when deprecating the Divine Displeasure, in which Cases Persons may take a greater Liberty when most withdrawn from the hearing of others.^{Luke xxii. Num. xiv. 5.}

2. We should endeavour to have our Oratories, or Closets furnish'd for all the Purposes of Devotion; I mean, with such Books as may be helpful to us in the several Parts of our Duty; as a Bible, a Psalm-Book, a Commentary, and Concordance, with other religious Tracts, both doctrinal and devotional, which, if well chosen, are certainly the chief Ornament of a Christian's Closet, and of greatest Use to him in his Work there.

I would also advise, that you have in your Oratory, the Notes of such Sermons as you hear; which supposes that you take Notes in Publick, or when you come Home, and write down the more remarkable Hints, and useful Passages, in the Sermons of the Day; (which a careful and diligent Hearer, who is concerned to improve every Sabbath, and every Sermon, will not ordinarily, at least, always, omit.) Add to these a *Diary* (or the Account you keep of the State of you own Souls.) In your Offices, or Shops, you have the State of your Trade in Journals, Ledgers, and other Books of Account; in
your

your Oratories you have ^b *spiritual Account-Books*, several Rccckonings stated and recorded between God and you, which are to be frequently perus'd, and improv'd, in the Course of your Closet-Religion.

3. Some have thought it subservient to the Ends of Retirement, to have their Oratory, or Place of Devotion, *set apart for, and appropriated thereto.*

“ It would be a Thing of singular Use, says Dr.
 “ *Patrick*, if those that have so much Room in
 “ their House, would set some little Place apart
 “ for holy Duties, and let it be acquainted with
 “ no other Thoughts but of God and their own
 “ Souls: This would be a Means of putting all
 “ other Employments and Thoughts out of
 “ Mind, which would all leave us when we
 “ came to that Place where they were Strangers;
 “ none of them would be so bold as to tread in
 “ that Place, which is wash'd with Tears; they
 “ would not draw Breath, nor live in that Place,
 “ where there is no Air, but Sighs and Prayers;
 “ they would never abide in that Room, where
 “ no Inhabitant is, but God; for we find, if we
 “ come to any Place, where something of Con-
 “ cernment has been done by us, the very Sight
 “ of the Place revives the Image of the Thing.
 “ If therefore we had a Place of Privacy, where
 “ we did nothing but read, and pray, and invite
 “ God into our Company, as soon as we did
 “ but look into it, the Face of God would meet
 “ us, and we should be struck with a certain
 “ Awe and Reverence from his Presence, that
 “ uses to be there with us: But if a Man
 “ pray in his Shop, or Counting-House, the
 “ Thoughts

^b Concerning the Manner and Use of such Diaries, more will be said afterward, if I consider the extraordinary Work of Retirement.

“ Thoughts of Money will be apt to meet him,
 “ his Bills and Bonds will thrust themselves into
 “ his Mind, &c. ”

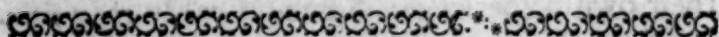
But as this can't be expected from the main Body of Christians, (that they should be so well accommodated I mean) so it is not of that Importance, as to require any great Solitude about it. The same Place may, no doubt, serve for sacred and common Work, at distant Intervals, and different Times, provided we attend both with due Watchfulness, and with a suitable Temper of Mind: If the Heart be in frame, the Christian may be devout and serious in any Place that is tolerably convenient. However, I shall not take upon me to deny what this grave Author and others may assert from their own Experience: Some probably may find it a Sort of a natural Help to their Devotion, to have their little Oratory reserv'd, as a Place of solemn Interview with God; never suffering any worldly Affairs to intrude into it. No doubt but *Jacob's* Sight of his Pillar would excite his Devotion, and give a Solemnity to the Frame of his Mind, when he recollected what pass'd between God and him there. But in this I leave every one to their own Liberty: I would only say, that as the Work I am about to recommend to you, is of the greatest Importance of any in the World; so you should endeavour to be provided for it, in the best Manner your Circumstances will allow. A convenient Apartment, and suitable Supplies of good Books are very desirable; and methinks I would rather chuse to want the Ornament of a few Pictures, and a Cupboard of Plate or *China*, than these Helps for my Soul.

Genesis
xxviii. 18.

4. I add, such as cannot attain to these best Accommodations, must not however neglect the Duties of the Closet, but perform them as well
 as

as they can, under all their Disadvantages. You have, it may be, no Choice of Apartments, which is the Case of those Families that have but one Room for all Purposes; yet something of Closet-Religion is expected from them, and should be perform'd notwithstanding. A Curtain may serve to make a Sort of an Oratory, or the rest may withdraw and leave the Room to one, which may be done *in Turns*, and sometimes you may chuse *Isaac's* Oratory, which was the open Field. *He went out* to meditate, or pray at the Evening-tide.

Gen. xxiv.
63.



CHAP. II.

Of the Work to be done in Retirement. Of reading the Holy Scriptures. Proper Choice to be made of the Scriptures read. The Method to be fix'd by a Calendar. The Scriptures read, to be understood, and expounded to our selves. Some Examples of such Expositions.

SECT. I.

I Am in the next Place to give an Account of the Work and Business we have to do when we retire. Our Lord went into an Oratory to pray, *i. e.* to converse with God and his Father, as I have explain'd it; and this is to be our Employment in our Closets. I shall consider it both

as

as ordinary and stated, and extraordinary and occasional: The latter I may afterwards speak to in a distinct Discourse, and shall at present confine my self to the *stated and ordinary Work* of Retirement.

I. One Part of the Duty of the Closet is a *devout Reading of the holy Scriptures*. Some have thought that the *Jewish Proseuchæ*, or Oratories, were appropriated to Prayer, and that they did not use to read the law in them; which they make one Difference between the *Proseuchæ*, and Synagogues: But whatever there be in this, 'tis certain the Christian Oratories will admit of this Exercise; we are *there* to converse with God in his Word, as well as in Prayer. The *Romanists* indeed not only deny this to be the Duty of the Laity, but have made it impossible to them, whilst they forbid them the Use of the holy Scriptures (having put the Bible it self, translated into the Mother-Tongue, into their *Index Expurgatorius*.) In *Protestant* Countries, particularly in *England*, they are more on the Reserve in this matter, and will, upon Occasion, grant their Licence to *certain* Persons to have the *Bible* in their own Language; which implies, however, that it is not free for all, nor for any, without their Permission, and how few can obtain that Favour is well known. But never was there a more daring Usurpation of proud and presumptuous Worms; a more open Affront offered to the great Lawgiver of the Church, or a grosser Instance of Unmercifulness to the Souls of Men. It was a just Complaint of Archbishop *Tillotson* on this Head, " 'Tis a hard Case, says
" he, the Church of *Rome* reduces Men to, who
" will neither allow them any Salvation out of
" their Church, nor the best and most effectual
" Means of Salvation when in it."

C

But

But as I am not at present concern'd with these Men, I shall not spend any Time in confuting their Cavils. You know your Right and Liberty in this Respect; your Bibles lie open to you; you are not only allow'd, but invited and encourag'd to make diligent constant Use of them; which is what I wou'd on this Occasion earnestly recommend to you. God has wrote unto you the *great things of his law*: Do not account them as *strange things*; don't neglect them as foreign things that you have no Interest in, or Concern with; but let it be a Part of your daily Closet-Religion to peruse your Bibles; to meditate on the Law of the Lord, and the great things thereof.

And this being a matter of the utmost Consequence, and what, it may be, the Generality of Christians are as defective in, as in any other Branch of Closet-Devotion, I shall endeavour your Assistance in the best Manner I can: and shall first lay before you some Directions how to proceed in the Discharge of this Duty, and then offer some Considerations to press it upon you. I'll begin with the Directions.

First, Make Choice of proper Parts, and Books of Scripture for your reading. I cannot admit that reading Scripture in a direct Order, beginning at *Genesis*, and going through the several Books in Course, as they lie in our Bible, is the most profitable Method: Not but that all Scripture is useful for the Ends and Purposes for which it was wrote, and all to be read and studied; but all is not alike useful to any, much less alike easy to be understood, or alike fitted for the Service of the Closet. There are many Prophecies, several of the Levitical Institutions, Genealogies, &c. that the main Body of Christians can make but little Improvement of, (especially in a
Way

Way of Worship) and I can't think these should be read by them, *as often* as other Parts of Scripture, which are better suited to their Capacity, and to the Ends of their Retirement; and therefore, I say, make *a prudent Choice* of Scripture; select those Parts of the *Bible* that you can best understand, and best improve, and let these be the Subject of your more constant reading. What particular Books you should chuse for this Purpose, I leave to your selves to judge; only would suggest, that some previous Enquiry and Study may be requisite, to fit such and such Books for the Purpose I am speaking of. Suppose, for instance, you make Choice of the Book of *Genesis*, *Exodus*, the *Psalms*, or any other of the *Old Testament*, or any Part of these; you should endeavour, by reading Commentators upon them, &c. to prepare them for the Oratory. So that there is a twofold reading of Scripture, the one in a way of rational Study and Enquiry, the other in a way of Devotion; and 'tis the former of these I am here recommending as a Help to the latter; and according to your Proficiency and Improvement thereby, you will have more or less of the Scripture fitted for the Closet.

Secondly, Fix the Method of reading, and take care to have your Work cut out beforehand, that you may know what Portion of Scripture you are to apply your selves to from time to time; and don't satisfy your selves to read *any where*, as the Bible opens, without Design or Choice. For instance, if you intend to go through this or that Book of the *Old Testament*, in your stated reading, several of the *Psalms*, and most of the Books of the *New Testament*, I would cast them into a sort of a *Calendar*; as thus:

MARCH 1. { *Gen. i.* Or if three Chapters
 { *Pfal. i.* be too much, take two
 { *Mat. i.* of them.

MAR. 1. { *Gen. i.* MAR. 2. { *Mat. i.* MAR. 3. { *Gen. ii.*
 { *Psf. i.* { *Psf. ii.* { *Psf. iii.*

or any other that you appoint for your *Calendar*; and in the same Order you may go through the rest of the Books you have chosen for this Service: By which, you see, I would generally have a Psalm, (a select Psalm, not always in Course) join'd with every other Part of Scripture, in your daily reading, as being exceeding proper to assist your Devotion. This *Calendar* you may either form for a shorter or longer time; for a Year, or a Month, or a Week, as you see Cause. Only take Care to have a Supply of new Matter for your *Calendar*, before the old is quite exhausted.

Thirdly, Endeavour to comprehend, as well as you can, the Sense and Meaning of what you read. It is not the Sound of Words that's Scripture, but the Sense of them; nor is there any more Devotion in perusing an *English* Translation of the Bible than a *Latin* one, when you understand both alike, *i. e.* understand neither. It was a very proper Question of *Philip* to the Eunuch, Acts viii. when he found him reading his Bible, *Understandest thou*, says he, *what thou readest*? We should often put this Question to our selves, and never think we are employed, as becomes those that are worshipping God, and aiming at the Edification of our own Souls, in reading the Scripture, unless in some Measure we understand what we read; to which Purpose (besides the previous Study,

Study, before advis'd to, which has brought such particular Books into your *Calendar* you'll find it necessary, now and then at least, on this Occasion also, to make use of your Concordance and Commentator. We don't indeed pretend to have any infallible Expositions of Scripture, but we have several good Helps for the better understanding it, and should not despise or neglect them. Which of the numerous Commentators to prefer, I shall not take upon me here to direct; but ordinarily, such as are short, and give the literal Sense in a few Words, with an easy and clear Connection, are best fitted for your Assistance in your daily reading.

Fourthly, Expound that Part of Scripture that lies before you, to your selves; preach upon it to your own Hearts, and improve it so as may best answer the Purposes of Devotion; I mean the Scripture of the Day, as I may call it, and which your *Calendar* now directs you to. There is certainly a Difference between reading the Scripture at other times, when we study it very much, as we do common Books, with a Design chiefly to find out its Meaning, and reading it *as a part of Worship*; in which devout Affections are to be exercis'd, and Endeavours used to work it upon our Hearts, by a suitable and close Application, as the Matter requires.

That I may fully explain my Meaning, and encourage you to the Practice of a Duty of exceeding Moment, as I apprehend this to be, I shall give you several Examples and Specimens of what I intend; some more loose and general, others more exact and methodical. Suppose the Section or Portion of Scripture you are to read, be *Gen. i. Psal. i.* 'tis not enough that you read these over, and understand something of the Meaning

of them, and so close the Book without further Thought or Reflexion; but you are to expound, as I said, what you have read, and apply it to your own Hearts as well as you can.

As for Example, *Gen. i.* (the Chapter being read) I have here, say you, an Account of the Creation of the World in six Days; the Particulars, the Order, and Manner of the Work; that it was accomplish'd by the Almighty's *Fiat*; for *by the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the Host of them by the Breath of his Mouth; he spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast*; he only said (! here read) *let there be Light*, and there was Light; *let there be a Firmament*, and there was a Firmament, &c. I have also an Account of the Formation of Man, how he was distinguish'd from the rest of the Creatures, being made upon Consultation, as it were, and in the Image and Likeness of God. The Chapter concludes with God's Review of his Work, and Approbation of it. *God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good*; exactly suited to answer the End of its Creation, and the Design of the All-wise Creator: And how full a Demonstration is here of an eternal, necessary, infinitely perfect Being? How strong a Proof of the Existence of that God, whom, as a Christian, I am taught to worship? How authentick an History of the Original of all Things; and that with such Clearness and Satisfaction, as the Heathen Philosophy could never attain to? What an Illustration is here of the Attributes and Perfections of the Divine Nature? How amazing that Power that spoke such a World as this into Being? How admirable the Wisdom that shines forth in the Variety, Harmony, and Order of all Things? And oh my Soul! how fit an Object is
this

this glorious Being of thy Fear, thy Love, thy Trust, Dependance, &c.

And having thus glanced at some Passages in this Chapter, in a more general way, you may proceed to the first Psalm, suppos'd also a Part of the present Portion of Scripture you have before you, which you may consider a little more fully now, or on another Occasion.

In this Psalm (say you) I observe, 1. The Character of a pious and blessed Man, ver. 1. 2. An Account of his Blessedness, ver. 1, 3. 3. This illustrated from the opposite State of the ungodly, v. 4, 5. 4. The Reason of both, v. 6.

1. The Character of the pious and blessed Man, and this Negative in three Particulars. *He walk-* Ver. 1.

eth not in the Counsel of the Ungodly, nor standeth in the way of Sinners, nor sitteth in the Seat of the Scornful; by which it will be easy to apprehend is meant, that in his Principles, Temper, Conduct and Life he's distinguish'd from such Persons: He doth not approve of their Course, imitate their Examples, and walk in their Way; their Way of Vanity, Worldliness, Pride, Profaneness, Neglect of God and Religion, &c. He may in the Surprize of a Temptation step into the way of Sinners, but he does not *walk* in it, *stand* in it; much less does he seat himself in the Chair of the Scornful, inwardly despising Religion, and making a Jest of sacred things. And then here's Ver. 2.

the positive Character of the blessed Man: *His Delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in his Law does he meditate Day and Night*: The holy Scriptures are his Study, his Exercise, and constant Entertainment. He delights in the History of Scripture as it contains a most authentick Account of the great Foundations of Religion, the Creation of the World, the Origin of Man, the

Occasion of his Apostacy, and the glorious Plan of Redemption by the promised *Messias*: He delights in the Precepts of it, as a most exact Rule of Life; in the exceeding great and precious Promises of it, a never-failing Spring of the strongest Consolation; and in the whole, as 'tis a Means of sanctifying his Nature, enriching the Mind, and of pleasing Intercourse with Heaven, for so he finds it. It follows (and no wonder) *that he meditates therein Day and Night*, i. e. he studies it with Diligence, Constancy, and Care.

2. Here's further to be observ'd, the Account given of the Blessedness of such an one, which is asserted in general Terms: Blessed is the Man, or, *O the Blessedness of that Man*, as I remember I have heard the Original imports: He is certainly, fully, and every way blessed; and tho' I don't pretend to understand the *Hebrew* Criticism, (as must be suppos'd the Case of many whom I would willingly engage in this Exercise) yet methinks I can readily close with the Sense of it; for surely none on Earth are happy, so happy as the Persons here describ'd, *They that delight in God, and his Word: Great Peace have they that love thy Law, and nothing shall offend them.* After this general Intimation of the good Man's Blessedness, here's a particular Instance, wherein he's blessed, *He shall be like a Tree planted by the Rivers of Water*, which bringeth forth its Fruit in its Season, &c. *Planted by the Rivers of Water*, from whence it is supplied with sufficient Moisture, so that it remains always fresh, and is always fruitful, and to such a Tree is the good Man compar'd, who delights in the Law of the Lord, &c. And there seems two things imply'd in this Similitude, that the main Happiness of a Christian lies in his being fruitful, ready to every good Work, and
abounding
- Ver. 1.
- Ver. 3.

abounding therein; and that God's Law, and his Delight therein, has a special Influence upon his Fruitfulness. What a Canal of Water is to the Tree planted on its Bank, that is the holy Scripture to the Believer, he derives refreshing, fructifying Streams from thence.

And now how easy are such Remarks as these?

1. That Religion is the only true and solid Foundation for Happiness: Oh the Blessedness of——
Of whom? Not the rich, the mighty, the noble, as such; but of the Man who walks not in the Counsel of the Ungodly, but delights in God's Law. Blessedness is annex'd to the Character, not of the great, but good: *The Fear of the Lord is the beginning*, (or chief Point) *of Wisdom.* 'Tis plain, as there are two different States in the other World, so are there two different sorts of Persons in this World, distinguish'd by their Counsels, Principles, Tempers, and Ways: What the one are, the other are not. 3. The great Distinction of these two sorts of Persons, is very much founded upon their different Regard to the Divine Law: *The one* neglect it, conducting themselves by Measures and Counsels of their own, and not by those of the divine Law, as is here intimated; their Life is fram'd according to carnal, worldly Maxims, praising such as do well for, or to themselves, and blessing the Covetous, whom the Lord abhors. Their Pride, Ambition, and other Lusts, prescribe Laws to them. *The other sort* live by an higher and more divine Rule: God's Law is their Delight, &c. Of how much Consequence is it, to a good Man, rightly to value, study, and delight in the Word of God? From hence he's distinguish'd from the Ungodly; from hence his Character, from hence his Blessedness and Fruitfulness. Oh! may I never forget

forget thy Precepts, for by them thou hast honoured me, by them thou hast quickned me.

Fifthly, I observe the false Notions the World has of Happiness: Let the Men of this World judge of it, how different will their Sentence be from that which is here pronounc'd by the inspiring Spirit? The good Man, says he, is blessed, *for* he shall be like a Tree planted by the Rivers of Water, that is constantly and seasonably fruitful. Fruitfulness is the Christian's Blessedness; to have an Heart to love and serve God, to converse with him in his Word, Providences, Ordinances; to bring forth the Fruits of Justice, Righteousness, Piety, in all the Branches of it; to be able to abound in the Work of the Lord; to be furnish'd to every good Word and Work; *This is Blessedness*, Lord grant me this: I need, I desire no more!

Ver. 4. 3. This blessed State is illustrated by the opposite State of the Ungodly: In general *the Ungodly are not so*. They neither answer the Character, nor are intitled to the Happiness of the pious Man; they delight not in the divine Law, are not like the Tree planted by the Rivers of Water, &c. but, *are as the Chaff, which the Wind driveth away*; of little Worth, and no Stability. It follows, *wherefore the Ungodly shall not stand in the Judgment, nor Sinners in the Congregation of the Righteous*; i. e. they shall be cast and condemn'd in the great Day of the Lord, and not admitted into the general Assembly, and Church of the First-born.

4. The Psalm concludes with the Reason of both, *viz.* the Happiness of the one, and the Misery of the other. The *Lord knows*, that is, approves the Way of the Righteous, and therefore, as is imply'd, he is blessed; but, as must be also imply'd,

imply'd, he knows not, approves not the Way of the Ungodly, and therefore, *it shall perish.* And from hence I observe, 1. How worthless and vile the Ungodly are: Whatever Names and Titles they are distinguished by, and with whatever Grandeur and Pomp they appear, they are, in God's Account, *as Chaff*, and accordingly represented as worthy of Contempt. 2. What a Change will there be hereafter in the State of Things? *The Ungodly shall not stand in Judgment*, Ps. xv. 4. &c. Now we often see the Reverse of this: *In the Place of Judgment, Iniquity is there.* The Saints, the Excellent of the Earth are frequently cast out, dishonour'd, despis'd; but hereafter the Tables will be turn'd; a glorious Distinction shall be made in Favour of them: *The Upright shall have Dominion in the Morning.* 3. How transient and short liv'd is that Delusion of an Happiness that ungodly Men glory in? What a Dream is it? They are as Chaff, which the Wind driveth away, and shall be cut down as the Grass, and wither as the Herb. 4. God is Judge, and 'tis by his Sentence that every one must stand or fall at last; as he knows, and approves our Way, or otherwise, so will our State be determin'd for ever. And oh! my Soul, learn from hence thy Duty, thy Interest, thy Happiness; what to chuse, and what to pursue: Guard against the Counsel and Way of the Ungodly: If Sinners entice thee, consent thou not; cast not in thy Lot amongst them, but refrain thy Foot from their Path; they are far from Blessedness, whatever they may imagine: Blessed is the Man that walks not with them; their Schemes and Projects, as they are wholly earthly and sensual, confin'd within the narrow Bounds of Time, and form'd without Regard to the superior Wisdom of God, in his Word, will shortly
come

come to nothing; don't therefore chuse with them, or live by their Measures. In the mean time, be not disturb'd at their Success, seemingly prosperous State: *Fret not thy self because of evil Doers, neither be thou envious because of the Workers of Iniquity*: They are but as Chaff, and shall be burnt up with unquenchable Fire; the Lord approves not their Way, and it shall perish. Lord, teach me thy Statutes; help me to make thy Law my Delight, and to rest in thy Favour, as my supream Happiness!

For another Specimen of the Method prescrib'd, let us a little consider *Matth. i.* also mark'd in the Calendar. The Chapter being read, you proceed thus: I find, say you, in this Chapter, 1. A Pedigree of Christ, or a Catalogue of his Ancestors, from whence he proceeded. I have often heard of some Difficulties in this Genealogy, which the *Jews*, and other Enemies of the Christian Faith, have objected to us; but I thank God they are no Stumbling-Block in my Way. The great Design of it, no question, is to assure us that Jesus Christ descended from the Families, to which he was promis'd, and from those Fathers, of whom, as concerning the Flesh, he was to come: And this being highly necessary to be known, I find the Evangelist, before the Relation of his Conception and Birth, takes Care to clear that Matter, and gives us his Pedigree; as *Luke* does, before he enters upon the Account of his publick Ministry. For the better Understanding, and Improvement of this more difficult Part of Scripture, let me observe, 1. That according to ancient Promises and Prophecies, the *Messiah* was to be of the Family of *Abraham*. The Promises were made to *Abraham*, and his Seed and accordingly he took on him the Seed of *Abraham*. He was also promis'd

Gen. xii. 3,
22, 28.

Gal. iii. 16.

Heb. ii. 16.

promis'd to *David* frequently which imply'd, that ² Sam. vii. of the Fruit of his Body God would raise up ^{16.} Christ, to sit upon his Throne. 2. I observe, that ^{Pf. lxxxix.} he is by the Evangelist first mention'd, as of the ^{4, 29.} Family of *David*, tho' promis'd long before to *Abraham*. The Reason of which some have thought to be, that the Promise to *David* was later, and most in the Mind of the *Jews*, who universally expected their *Messiah* out of the House of *David*, and as the Son of *David*. 3. I observe, ^{Matth. ix.} that for greater Clearness, for help of the Memo- ^{27.} ry, or some other Reason, the Evangelist divides ^{—xv. 22.} his Account into three remarkable Periods, (three times fourteen Generations) viz. from *Abraham* to *David*; from *David* to the Captivity; from the Captivity to the Birth of Christ. The first Division includes the Age of the Patriarchs; the second, that of the Kingdom and Temple, till its Ruin; the third begins at the Captivity, when the Kingdom and Temple were destroy'd, and reaches to the *Messiah*: The first brought the State to Glory, in the Kingdom of *David*; the second, to Misery, in the Captivity of *Babylon*; and the third, to Glory again, in the Kingdom of Christ. 4. Tho' I may not be able to answer all Cavils, and remove all Objections, which may be made against some Particulars in this Genealogy, this need not stagger my Faith. The Evangelist expressly asserts, that Jesus Christ was the Son of *David*, and *Abraham*; and not only so, but proceeds to prove it, in a Table of his Descent; which he left to the Perusal and Judgment of the Age: Nor did I ever hear, that the *Jews* of that time, who were skill'd, to a Nicety, in Matters of this Nature, ever charg'd the Evangelist with Mistakes: So that if there should be found any Names, or other Difficulties, that

that the unlearn'd, such as my self, cannot account for at this Distance, I have not the least Reason from thence, to conclude against the Authority of the Evangelist, but must rather impute it to the want of those Means of Satisfaction, in these Particulars, that the *Jews* then had, but we want. It was necessary that the Evangelist should prove, that Christ was of the Family of *David*, otherwise he had better not have attempted any thing of a Pedigree; and 'tis absurd to think he would expose to public View a Table that was liable to Exception: Tho', after all, there are no Difficulties, but what I find learned Men are able to remove. And therefore,

5. I conclude that *Jesus Christ* is really the Son of *Abraham* and of *David*, according to ancient Prophecies, and consequently that so far he answers the Character of the promis'd *Messiah*. Here then I have a Foundation for my Faith. Had he wanted this Qualification, all the Miracles he wrought would not have entitl'd him to the Dignity of the *Messiahship*; but since this Point is clear'd, I am the better prepar'd to attend the other Evidences, and peruse with greater Regard the History of him.

I find also in this Chapter an Account of the Conception and Birth of Christ, from the 18th to the 24th Verse: Where, 1. I observe the Strait *Joseph* was in: *Joseph* and *Mary* were espoused, but not married, and before they came together, he apprehends her to be with Child, and, knowing nothing of the Mystery, concludes she had been unfaithful to him; whereupon he resolves not to take her to Wife, but dismiss her: For being a *just Man*, he would not receive into his Bosom a suppos'd Adulteress; but then he resolves to do it privately, concealing the Espousals, being a
merciful

merciful and good Man, (which some suppose the $\Delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\varsigma$. Sense of the Word here used) and therefore was unwilling to expose her to the Rigour of the Law and the Penalty due to an Adulteress; Charity suggesting, no question, many things in her Favour. 2. The whole Matter is clear'd up to him; for whilst he was reasoning with himself, and attending the several Pleas in his own Breast (as we may suppose) of Justice to the Demands of the Law, Mercy to the Offender, and Tenderness to one he entirely lov'd, the Angel of the Lord, in a Dream, makes known the Mystery, and assures him, *She was with Child of the Holy Ghost*, and therefore he need not fear any Disgrace by owning the Relation. 3. His Birth is foretold, and his Name given him by the same Angel. *She* Ver. 21. *shall bring forth a Son, and shall call his Name Jesus, for he shall save his People from their sins.*

The Name imports his Office, which was to be a spiritual Deliverer, to save from Sin; and the same was given him by his Parents, at his Circumcision, it's likely; and, no question, he went by that Name during his private Life (as well as afterwards) *Jesus* or *Joshua the Carpenter's Son*.

4. 'Tis remark'd, that thereby an ancient Prophecy was accomplish'd: *All this was done, that* Ver. 22. *it might be fulfill'd, Behold a Virgin shall be with Child, and they shall call his Name Immanuel, i. e. he shall be Immanuel, God with us, God among Men, as his Works manifested him to be.* 5. The Chapter concludes with *Joseph's* Obedience to the Vision; he takes her to Wife; yet out of Reverence to so extraordinary a Conception, and by special Providence of God, abstains from her till she was delivered; and then the holy Infant is named *Jesus*.

But oh my Soul! what shall I say to these Things?

Things? 1. Pause a little, and with all humble Devotion contemplate this surprising Subject: How justly does the Prophet say his Name shall be called *Wonderful*! A Virgin with Child! With Child of the Holy Ghost! Let Angels and Men bow the Head and adore! *Ask of the Days that are past, since the Day that God created Man on the Earth, and ask from the one Side of Heaven to the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is.* No, 'tis a new thing created in the Earth: Never was there such a Conception and such a Birth! 2. What great Expectations may we justly have from so extraordinary a Person; and what admirable Preparation is here for his high Function? Was he to reform a degenerate World, by Teaching and Example? Was he to exhibit a perfect Pattern of Virtue and Religion? Was he to be a publick Victim for the Expiation of Sin? Behold a Miracle in his Conception, so far fitting him for all this! 3. What Esteem and Reverence, &c. is due to this wonderful Person, conceiv'd by the Holy Ghost, and born of a Virgin? O my Soul! read with suitable Regard the History of his Life; receive with all Submission his Doctrine, and resign to his Authority. 4. How comfortable the Name he bears, *Jesus a Saviour*! 'tis as Ointment poured forth, the most grateful Sound in the World to lost and perishing Sinners: And methinks there is some Assurance of the Success of this beneficial Office, in that the Name is given him by an Angel from Heaven, sent upon this Occasion, and, no question, with Commission thus to name and characterize the Divine Birth. 5. I observe some Restriction and Limitation in the Salvation Jesus is Author of: *He shall save his People from their sins*; only the People of the Messiah will be eventually saved

saved by him, and who these are the royal Prophet intimates; (*viz.*) such as forsake not his Law, but walk in his Judgment; that are under an holy Restorative, reforming Discipline, such as believe in him (as their Character is elsewhere express'd) and are subject to him: Such as partake of his Anointing, have the same Temper and Complexion that he had. In short, such as ^{Συμμόρφους} are a peculiar People, sanctify'd by his Word and ^{οὐκ} Spirit, and zealous of good Works. ^{Rom. viii. 29.}

And then I observe he saves them from their Sins, not in them. And now, oh my Soul! with what Satisfaction may I peruse this Part of Scripture? behold here the Accomplishment of many ancient prophetick Oracles: Surely this is he that was to come, nor will I look for another; this is that Seed in whom all the Families of the Earth were to be blessed; *the Seed of the Woman* by way of Distinction and Peculiarity; born of a Virgin, by the overshadowing mysterious Influences of the divine Spirit: And as his Errand was kind, beneficent, suitable to my Necessities, as he's Jesus a Saviour, may I secure my Part and Interest in him; may I be one of his People, may I accept the Salvation he came to bestow, *viz. A Salvation from Sin*. Oh my Soul! never call him *Jesus*, if he be not *thy Lord*: He saves by his Blood and by his Spirit; as Jesus he both atoneth and sanctifieth, nor must thou expect the Benefit of his Cross, if thou dislikest his Scepter.

The second Psalm will offer it self in your *Calendar* at the same time, as Part of the Scripture next to be read, now or afterward, when you address your self to the like Work. You may proceed in some such manner as this. You 1. enquire into the Penman and Occasion of the Psalm; which is ordinarily the best Key to let us into the

D

understanding

understanding of it ; and tho' we have neither of these mention'd in the Inscription or Title, yet the Apostle assures us *David* wrote it, and it may be your Commentator may suggest, the Occasion probably was his peaceful Settlement on the Throne of *Judab* and *Israel*, after the Opposition he met with from the *Philistines*, *Moabites*, *Syrians*, &c. in reflecting upon which Matter the Spirit of God led him to Expressions fit, and design'd to represent the Establishment of the *Messiah* in his Kingdom, and his Triumph over all his Enemies. In the beginning of the Psalm he expostulates with, and insults, as it were, the malicious Opposers of his Government. *Why do the Heathen rage, and the People imagine a vain thing ?* They set themselves against him (the Lord's Anointed) which in the spiritual Sense was fulfill'd in his Son the *Messiah*, and the same Part acted over again by *Herod*, *Pontius Pilate*, and the Rulers of *Israel*. From the 4th to the 10th ver. he shews the Vanity of their Attempts, as they were opposing the Council and Appointment of God, both with respect to *David* and the great *Messiah* : He that sat in the Heavens despis'd the Malice, and laughed at the weak Efforts of such Worms : Christ the *Messiah* was, by the Decree of God, to sit upon the Throne typified by *David's*, to rule over the Gentile World, with absolute Authority and irresistible Power. This is the Counsel of God, and it shall stand ; *for he must reign till he hath put all his Enemies under his Feet*, dashing them in pieces like a Potter's Vessel. He concludes the Psalm with suitable Advice, that all wou'd own, and make Obeisance to this mighty Sovereign. And hence I observe, 1. That the Psalms are not human Composures. God spake by the Mouth of his Servant *David*, says the Apostle, referring to this

Acts iv. 25.

Acts iv.
27.

Ver. 25.

this very Psalm: They are Part of that Scripture, which is given by divine ^c Inspiration, and accordingly I would peruse them. 2. The Opposition Christ met with is what was foretold, and comparing the Prophecy and History together, the Prediction and Event, my Faith is the more confirm'd in the *Messiah*. 'Tis no Objection to me against my Saviour, that the Rulers did not so readily believe in him: The Prophecy represented that thus it should be, and as the Scripture *must* be, so here it was fulfilled. 3. 'Tis evident Christ's Kingdom stands on a Rock, and cannot be shaken, *viz.* The Decree and Stipulation of God: He has by Oath made him a royal Priest for ever; and tho' the Heathen rage, *'tis in vain*; the Gates of Hell shall never prevail against his Church: He *will strike through Kings in the day of* ^{Pf. cx. 4.} *his wrath*. Be convinc'd then, O my Soul! of ^{5, 6.} thy Duty and thy Interest: Be wise, be instructed in this great and momentous Affair: *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry*; bow to his Scepter, or thou shalt perish in his Wrath, be broken by his Iron Rod. Lord, enthrone thy self in my Heart, take fuller Possession of my Soul; grant me the Inheritance of those that fear thee; *the Blessedness of those that trust in thee*.

D 2

SECT.

^c The Inspiration of the Penmen of Scripture was, no question, different, according to the different Nature of the Subjects they were concerned with. Sometimes the inspiring Spirit led the Prophet (the Person he inspired) to his Subject, and supplied it to him, furnishing him with the entire Matter, saying to him, as the *Alpha* and *Omega* to *John*: ^{Rev. i. 11.} *What thou seest write in a Book*. At other times, I suppose, he only struck in with the Meditation, which particular Occasions might invite to, directing and improving it: So that the Composure was at once the Work of the devout Mind, and expressive of its present Frame, and yet the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost; which I take to be the Case, often at least, of *David* and other Psalmists.

S E C T. II.

*Other Specimens of the Method propos'd,
upon Gen. ii. Psal. iii. Psal. iv.*

Ver. 3. LET me offer another Specimen, still in the Course of your *Calendar*, which is *Gen. ii.* The Chapter read, I find here, say you, (reviewing what was more particularly related in the foregoing Chapter) that the World and all the kinds of Creatures in it, were made in six Days, and that to preserve the Memory of so glorious a Work, and give an Opportunity of conversing with the Author, a *Sabbath*, or Day of holy Rest, is appointed: *God blessed the seventh Day, and hallowed it.* And if infinite Wisdom saw it convenient for innocent Man in Paradise, to have a stated time of solemn Religion, how much more necessary is it for him in his present deprav'd State, when he is fallen into such a Forgetfulness of God, his Duty and Happiness? O my Soul! be thankful for this Day, own the Authority, Wisdom, and Goodness of G O D in the Appointment of it: *Remember to keep it holy*; endeavour to abstract and withdraw thy Thoughts from earthly things, and enter upon the Life of Heaven, as far as thou canst on this Day. Let it be as one of the Days of Heaven to thee: Sabbath-Religion was from the Creation; 'tis the good old Way, walk in it, and never be ashamed of it. The Homage due to the Creator, the Care of thy own Soul demands this of thee.

As in the former Chapter I read of the Creation of Man, and the Dignity conferr'd upon him therein;

therein ; so in the summary Repetition of things in this Chapter, the Matter is resum'd, and further explain'd. *And the Lord God formed Man of the Dust of the Ground, and breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life :* Where I observe a signal Instance of that Power of God, who could raise out of the Dust of the Earth so admirable a Structure as the human Body. I observe also the Soul has a different Original from that of the Body ; for whilst the one was formed of Dust, the other is breath'd from God himself, an Intimation of that great Article of Religion, *The Immortality of the Soul* ; its Capacity of Existence separate from the Body, and without Dependence upon it : And this I am assured it shall do, for when the Dust, (that is, the Body made out of Dust, as I here read) returns to the Earth as it was, the Soul shall return to God that gave it. I further observe the Dignity and Excellency of the Soul above the Body : The one is *of the Earth earthy* ; the other is a Spirit from Heaven ; the one form'd out of Dust, the other breath'd from God in an immediate Manner ; *particula divinæ auræ*, as the Poets call it : The Breath of Life, a Ray of Divinity, the Off-spring of God. Oh may I duly value, and with suitable Care and Concern secure the Interest of my immortal Soul ! and not *despise*, prostitute, sacrifice it for the sake of a little animated Dust ; this Lump of Earth, *my vile Body*.

God having constituted Man Lord of this lower Creation, provides, for his greater Comfort and Delight, a most pleasant Garden, where he was to reside, and which he was to dress and keep. And here he receiv'd a Law, not to eat of a certain Tree, on pain of Death. He had free Enjoyment of all the rest, but this he must not touch : With reference to which let me observe,

1. That this is not properly the Covenant of Works God made with innocent Man: *That was before*; the Terms of which were contain'd and reveal'd in Nature, and the Duties of it engraven on the Heart of Man. 2. That this was only a

positive Law, subservient to the Covenant of Nature, design'd to try Man's Obedience to his Creator and Sovereign, according to the original antecedent Law he was under; and therefore a Thing indifferent in it self was made Choice of for this Purpose, that it might appear whether he would be subject to the mere Will of his Maker, when the Matter requir'd of him had no intrinsick Goodness in it to influence his Obedience. So that 3. This Command or Restraint was properly *an Expression of God's Sovereignty*, and intended as a Mark thereof, and of his Creature's Dependance and Subjection: (*q. d.*) "Hear, O Adam, I have
 " made thee my Vicegerent in the World, and
 " have given thee all the Creatures and all Paradise for thy Subsistence and Delight; only this
 " is a reserv'd Right, in token that in the Throne
 " I am greater than thou. Enjoy thy God, thy
 " self, and a whole World: Only on thy Allegiance, *touch not this Fruit.*"

4. The Penalty was Death; which is a general Word, including all Sorts of Miseries, of Body and Soul, Time and Eternity: In this Extent and Latitude, in Part at least, 'tis expounded in the next Chapter, (when the Sentence is pronounced against the several Offenders, and branch'd out into its Particulars) and accordingly it is executed upon the Apostate unbelieving World, and *in part* upon all Mankind. It was this Transgression that opened the Sluices, and let in all the Calamities which have overflowed us; the Vanity, the Sorrow, Suffering, and Pain, under which the whole
 Creation

Creation groans ; Sicknefs of Body, Horror of Conscience, Death, and even Hell are the Fruit of Sin, (and originally spring from this Sin, as the Occasion of actual Sin) all the Evil we suffer, all we fear is comprehended in that Threatning, *In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.* There was indeed a Reprieve, and a Redemption from the full Curse ; but all Misery, both in Kind and Degree, became due ; and so much is inflicted still, even on the redeem'd World, as makes them feel that they have sinned, and that Sin is an evil thing and bitter. 5. When I reflect on the Nature of the Offence, I cannot think the Punishment at all unjust, or disproportion'd to the Crime ; nor do they consider things with any great Judgment or Modesty that presume, as the Manner of some poor Worms is, to arraign the great Lawgiver on this Account, charging him foolishly : Threaten Death and Hell, say they, for eating an Apple ! What Equity ! But if it was so small a Matter as they pretend, the more inexcusable the Offender, that would not abstain ; especially when the Will of God was so express. In short, the Disobedience of this Fact was no less than *an Attempt to cast off God's Sovereignty* : It was an Act of open Rebellion, a Sort of *disputing the Throne with the Almighty* ; and whether the unhappy aspiring Creature had not something of this in view (as may seem imply'd in what the Serpent insinuated, *Ye shall be as Gods*) I shall not say : But how heinous the Crime, for Dust thus to rebel ! how deserving of the Penalty ! and how exceeding abundant that Mercy which propounded a Saviour ! the Grace that found a Ransom !

Ver. 5.

And, oh my Soul, contemplate in this Instance, the horrid Nature of Sin. Every actual, *deliberate, known Sin*, is *after the Similitude of Adam's Transgression*,

Rom. v. 14. *gression*, 'tis a rejecting of God's Authority, and setting up our Wills against his. Oh ! stand in awe, and sin not : Let a *Thus says the Lord*, determine thy Obedience in every Instance ; let the God that made thee always rule thee : There is so much Evil and Malignity in a *wilful, allowed, deliberate Transgression*, that no Grace reveal'd to us will excuse it, or pardon it, *without suitable Repentance* ; and, I question not, had *Adam* persisted in a Course of such Iniquity, even after God's Treaty of Grace with him, he had perished, notwithstanding the New Covenant, and the Merit of the promis'd Seed. Lord, subdue my Will entirely to thine : *Keep back thy Servant from presumptuous Sins*, that I may be *innocent from the great Transgression*.

Ver. 18. *Adam* being thus placed in Paradise, and favour'd with the Enjoyments thereof, yet wants something to compleat his Happiness : God himself declares his present State defective, *'Tis not good that Man should be alone*, I will make him an Help meet for him ; and accordingly, in the Method and Way here related, a *second Self* is form'd out of him, (an *Isba* from *Isb*) to be Partner of his Cares, and Joys, and to be join'd with him in an inviolable bond of Love and Affection. Thus was Man advanc'd, and thus indulg'd by the Bounty of his Creator ; the Consideration of which highly aggravates the Guilt of his Offence : He sinn'd when Goodness did most abound. May it be a Warning to all his Posterity ! There seem'd to want but one Thing to perfect the Happiness of Paradise, and no sooner is that granted, but all is lost. O my Soul ! guard against the Snares of a prosperous State ; when thou hast a Garden and an *Eve*, beware of the Serpent : *David* was safe while attending the Sheepfolds, and praying in Caves

Caves and Desarts; but when advanc'd to the Throne, how wofully did he miscarry?

I'll subjoin another Example, viz. the third Psalm, which follows in the Calendar. The Psalm being read, you make your Remarks in some such Way as this. I learn, from the Title of the Psalm, the Penman, and Occasion: *A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his Son*; and here say you, 1. I observe the Distress this great and good Man was in, the Particulars of which I read in the History. The Conspiracy against him was so strong, that his Case was thought desperate: ^{2 Sam. xv.} 12.

Many said, there was no Help for him in God.

2. I observe the Exercise of his Faith, in a most eminent Manner, on this sorrowful Occasion: *But thou, Lord, art a Shield for me, my Glory, &c.* Ver. 3.

He casts his Burthen on the Lord, and rests with unshaken Confidence on his Power and Goodness: In the 14th Verse, he signifies what Course he took in former Troubles; or if the Psalm was penn'd after the Danger was over, it intimates what he did in his present Trouble, and shews with what Success: *I cried to the Lord with my Voice, and he heard me*; the Words import his Earnestness and Importunity. And hence, O my Soul, learn to expect Troubles and exercises in the World: So great a Saint as *David*, thou seest, was not free from them: Nor object against any Instances of Trial the divine Wisdom shall appoint. Was not *David* touch'd in a tender Part, when his own Subjects rose up against him, and his own Son was at the Head of them? And yet he quarrels not: Endeavour to take up the Cross; to drink the Cup thy heavenly Father puts in thine Hand: We are not to chuse our Burthens, but bear them, when God lays them on. O spare me in this; any thing but this, we are apt foolishly to say; and so might *David*; but neither

ther was he, nor am I, left to chuse. Learn also, O my Soul, from the Example of this good Man, to make God thy Refuge in time of Trouble; use him as thy Shield; cry to him with thy Voice; and leave thy Concerns in his Hand: Thus did *David* in this Hour of Difficulty, and it was his usual Course, as appears from his Psalms.

3. I observe the blessed Fruit of his Faith, and Prayer: How easy, how calm was *David* hereupon? He had committed himself and Cause to God, and got on the Top of Mount *Olivet*, and there worshiped, as we are told in the History. And how happy the Success? How compos'd and serene his Mind? *I laid me down*, says he, *and slept, I'll not be afraid of ten Thousands of the People, &c.* And now, I suppose, it was, when in this Employment, and in this blessed Frame, that he utter'd those admirable Words,

2 Sam. xv.
31.

Ver. 25, 26

Carry back the Ark of God into the City: If I shall find Favour in the Eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it, and his Habitation; but if he thus say, I have no Delight in thee, behold here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good to him, (q. d.) *A King, or a Victim, something or nothing,* as thou, Lord pleasest: and having thus thrown himself at the Feet of the most High, and pour'd out his Soul on the Mount, whither he retir'd for Devotion, having disburthen'd himself of all his anxious, solicitous Thoughts; lo, all is hush, and still within; and he can sleep in the midst of Terror, and Deaths! Surely never did Faith more triumph, never was Prayer more effectual. O my Soul! learn this way of Intercourse with thy God; let a Time of Trouble be a Time of Prayer, and when thou art afraid, trust in him: Imitate the Resignation, Submission, Devotion, which is so admirably exemplify'd in this Psalm;

Ver. 5.

beg

beg the same Spirit that, on this Occasion, holy *David* had, and then come what will, thou art under a sure Protection; God will be thy Dwelling-Place, thy Shield, thy All. In the 7th and 8th Verses, he concludes with a Prayer for further, and full Deliverance, ascribing the Glory of all Victory, Safety, and Success, to God. Lord form and impress my Mind according to the Doctrine, Spirit, and Scope of this Psalm; when in Trouble, like *David*, may I believe, and pray like him, with the same Fervour, and same Success.

Allow me to offer one Instance more, in a very few Words, of such Exposition, and Improvement, as may be imitated by very ordinary Capacities: Suppose the 4th Psalm fall in your Course of reading; you should first endeavour to learn the Occasion of it, which is of greatest Use towards understanding and improving the Psalm; and then consider the Subject Matter of the Psalm. Here, say you, I find the Psalmist in Trouble, (it may be, on the Account of *Abshalom's* Conspiracy against him) and therein making his Application to God, pleading former Experiences, and casting himself upon his Mercy and Goodness. Then he admonisheth, Ver. 1. and expostulateth with his Enemies, signifying, that all their Reproaches against, and Contempt of his Government and Authority, would be in vain, since by the divine Appointment he was advanced: Thence he proceeds to advise them calmly to debate things with themselves; to turn inwards, and talk with their own Hearts, and examine their Principles, Motives, &c. and to return to their Duty. In the mean time, however God should order these Matters, with reference to the Opposition of his Enemies, his own Deliverance, &c. in which he was, in a good Measure, resign'd, he most earnestly desires the Favour of God, the
Com-

Ver. 4, 5.

Comforts of his Presence, signify'd probably, by that Phrase, *Lift up the Light of thy Countenance upon us*, (tho' not excluding any lower Instances of God's Favour in temporal Deliverances) which being granted, he triumphs in it, as Matter of greater Joy than all worldly Prosperity can afford; and accordingly, with an easy, undisturb'd Mind, leaves himself, and all Events, to God, in the midst of his Dangers. And hence, O my Soul, in all thy Troubles, learn where to go for Relief; make God thy Refuge, and then thou art safe; learn to depend, and learn to plead, as *David* here doth: Lord teach me this divine Art; and may I always be mindful of the Admonition in the 4th Verse, (necessary for others, as well as *David's* Enemies) necessary to me at all times: May I *stand in awe of God, and sin not*; and as a Means of my Safety herein, may I often withdraw from the Noise and Hurry of this World, silently and secretly commune with my own Heart, examining my Undertakings and Actions at the Bar of my Conscience: And, Lord, whatever I want, deny me not the great distinguishing Blessing thy Servant so much valued, *viz. the Light of thy Countenance*. Let *the many*, as many as will, pursue their Idols, and rejoice in their Increase of worldly Goods; let this be the one thing my Soul desires.

And thus I have given some Specimens and Examples, of what I design'd. If any think I have carried the Matter too high for the generality of Christians, who cannot be suppos'd to have either Ability, or Leisure for such Performances in their daily Retirements: I answer; It is fit the Copy should have some Perfection in it, which the Learner may not be able immediately to come up to; I don't expect every serious and devout Person should enlarge upon each Chapter he reads, as fully, and in the

the same Methods as in these Specimens: Artificial Logical Divisions, close and pertinent Reflections are by no means necessary in the present Case, when Persons are expounding and speaking to themselves. Nor is it likely that any, even the most watchful Christians, should be able constantly, and every Day, without Intermission, to attend this Work, and carry on this Course of reading: They may sometimes want Leisure, and sometimes a Disposition both of Body and Mind: And this unavoidably. Let me add, there are many sincere Christians, from whom little of this nature can be expected at any time: Such as have not books, or can scarce read them; that are of very low and mean Understandings, that have little Invention, Thought, Memory, &c. So that I don't pretend to impose, so much as by Advice, this as a Duty *upon all*, much less as constant uninterrupted Duty, as if we cou'd never retire, worship God, and read a Chapter acceptably, unless we observed this Method.

But that which I insist upon, and recommend, is, that they, who have a Capacity for it, would more ordinarily endeavour thus to improve the Scripture, in the Course of their reading. I wou'd firstly and chiefly recommend it to Christians of the higher Rank; such as have good natural Parts, and Minds somewhat improv'd; that want (at least need want) neither Books nor Time. If such as these, wholly, or more usually neglect the Duty, 'tis certainly their own Fault; owing not to Incapacity, but Indisposition and Disaffection: *They can plead no Want, but that of a Spirit of Devotion.* And methinks it shou'd be Matter of uncomfortable Reflection to themselves, to find an *Acumen* and Dexterity for every thing else; to be expert and ready in the Affairs of the Body, and Concernments

cernments of the World, and at the same time to be impotent and stupid in the Business of Religion; *reprobate to every good Work* of this kind. Oh! that Christians wou'd consider where their greatest Wisdom and Excellency lies; in what their truest Interest consists. If you have more Time, Books, Parts, greater Capacity and Advantages than others you make but a sorry Use, and will give but a mean Account of them at last, if they terminate wholly in this Life, and are not employed in the Service of your Souls and Religion. You should endeavour to improve the Advantages, which by a kind Providence you are favour'd with: You have more Leisure, a better Education, greater Capacities than some others; but what will all this signify, unless you worship more and better than others?

I only add, that, notwithstanding the Concessions I have made, I can't question but the main Body of real Christians, tho' of lower and but common Abilities, may, with Success and Comfort, if they in earnest set about it; discharge this Duty, and improve their Bibles, as I am now advising. The Knowledge they have of the Principles of Religion, the Help of a stated Ministry, of a Commentator (which many at least may procure,) I may add the Help of God's Spirit (which will not be denied to those that sincerely ask it) will enable them to perform, in some good measure, what I am exhorting to: And therefore as I have recommended it to the serious Christian, I wou'd leave it upon his Conscience, earnestly requesting of him, that if he be convinced of the Usefulness and Excellency of the Method propos'd, he wou'd not neglect it; not only read the Scripture daily; but ordinarily, at least some times endeavour to expound and apply what you read.

If

Sect. III. *Of reading the Scripture.*

47

If hitherto you have been Strangers to this Work, be no longer so; make a serious Trial, and be not discouraged, tho' you meet with Difficulties in your first Essays: Do your best, and God will assist and accept you. *To him that bath, (and useth what he hath) shall be given.* The bare reading of the Scripture, without Understanding, Reflection, &c.) has no Religion, nor Devotion in it at all: You should endeavour to apprehend what God speaks in the Scripture, and what he speaks to you in particular, which should be followed with a suitable affectionate Application; and this is all I am here pleading for.

S E C T. III.

The Heart is impress'd by the Scriptures.

FIFTHLY, endeavour to get the Heart impress'd by the Scriptures, and formed according to the Tenor and Purport thereof: The Word of God should *dwell in us.* The Rules, Col. iii. 16. Doctrines, Laws, and very Spirit of the Bible, should be transcrib'd into our Souls; so that it may become *Νόμος ἐμψυχος*, a *Law within*, inwrought, as it were, into the Frame and Constitution of the Mind. Thus it was with the believing Romans, as the Apostle intimates, *Ye have obeyed* Rom. vi. 17. *from the Heart, that Form of Doctrine which was delivered you, or into which you are deliver'd; where* *Ἐκ δὲ παρρησίας* the Apostle compares the Doctrine of the Gospel *τύπον διδασκαλίας* to an Exemplar, Mold or Type ^a (τύπος) as in Stamps,

^a Doctrinam Christi emphaticè vocat τύπον, qui est exemplar accuratissimum, ad cujus formam opus aliquod exigendum est, ut Typus Tabernaculi *Act. vii. 44. Steph. de Brais in loc.*

Stamps, Seals or Signets : Accordingly to be delivered into such a Form or Type, is to receive the Impression of it, as the Wax does that of the Seal. Or if the Metaphor be borrowed from the *Goldsmiths*, the Sense is the same; for as Metals, when melted, and cast into a Mold, receive the Shape, Form, and Print thereof, so Christians are form'd and imprinted, as I may say, by the Scriptures; have the lively Signatures thereof upon them; are fram'd in their Desires, Affections, &c. thereby; which is a Matter of so exceeding moment, that we find it mention'd as the distinguishing Privilege of the New Covenant or Gospel Dispensation; *This shall be the Covenant which I will make with the House of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their Hearts.*

Jer. xxxi.
33.

This God has promis'd, and this he performs in some Degree, at the first Conversion, when the

2 Cor. iii. Christian receives the regenerating Spirit. *Ye are*
3. *the Epistle of Christ written, not with Ink, but with*
1 Pet. i. *the Spirit of the living God.* The Believer is then
23. *born again of incorruptible Seed by the Word of God.*
Jam. i. 18. *Begotten through the Word.* 'Tis further and more perfectly done afterwards, in the use of proper means, God still writing his Law *more and more* in the Heart of the Believer. The whole Life of a Christian is a sort of a sitting under the Hand of the Holy Spirit (to make use of another Metaphor) that he may, by new Strokes, finish the divine Image upon the Soul, and represent it with greater Beauty and Exactness: And as you shou'd, at other times, so especially when conversing with the Word of God in your Oratories, *place your selves, as it were, under the Hand of the Spirit, and under the Hammer of the Word,* as the Comparison is; waiting for, and earnestly desiring

Jer. xxiii.
29.

desiring further and deeper Impressions thereby. As the Word of God is the Seed of which we are born, so 'tis the Milk by which we grow, and 1 Pet. ii. 2. we should desire it for this Purpose, and accordingly receive it inwardly, and digest it. Christ sanctifieth and cleanseth the Church by the Word, and will continue to do so, 'till he hath made it glorious, and without Spot. O be concern'd to Eph. v. 26, experience something of this in your own Souls! 27.

(viz.) the sanctifying, transforming Influences of the divine Word, impress'd by the Holy Spirit: Read with a View to this, yielding your selves to the blessed Word of God, as Wax to the Seal; often saying, Lord, break this Rock of an hard Heart by the Hammer of thy Word: Take away the Heart of Stone; cast me into the Mold of thy Gospel; and write thy Law in the fleshy Tables of my Heart.

To explain my Meaning more fully, and set a Subject of so great Consequence in as clear a Light as I can, let me observe a few Things.

1. That the holy Scripture, or Law of God, is a sort of a Copy of God's Nature, and an Exemplar or Pattern of ours; it shews what God is, and we shou'd be. Is God holy, just, and good? So is his Law. So is the Christian in his Measure: Rom. viii. Indeed the Law of God contains the Principles, 12. Disposition, and Spirit of the Church; there is no Grace, Excellency, or Virtue, in the whole Body of the Saints on Earth, but the Law of God exhibits it, as I may say, describes and demands it.

2. The Law of God may then be said to be written in our Hearts (or we deliver'd into the Mold or Form of it) when we do in our most inward Principles, Disposition and Frame, as well as outward Conduct, answer thereto; when the

divine Likeness, instamp'd upon the Word, is by the Word iustamp'd upon our Hearts; and our Desires, Inclinations and Affections, are regulated thereby. The Word is the Seal, our Hearts are the Wax; the Impression receiv'd is the Effect of the Law, or the divine Temper communicated: What is said of the Promises, may be said of the other Parts of Scripture, viz. that by them we are *Partakers of the divine Nature*. The Promises, I may add the Precepts, Threatnings, all the Rules and Doctrines, and even Histories of the Word, are useful to beget and promote in us a divine Nature; and so far as they are written in the Heart, or the Heart is impress'd by them, something of that Nature is wrought in us: And this is what we should, all of us, endeavour for, as the Fruit and Effect of a devout Conversation with the Scripture. For further Illustration:

3. Let me observe, That as the main Scope of the Bible, and Substance of Religion, is contained in several general and comprehensive Laws and Maxims; so it shou'd be our great Concern, in reading the *Bible*, to get the Heart impress'd and form'd by these. To mention some of them; as that, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and all thy Soul, and all thy Might*; which our Saviour calls *the first and great Commandment*, adding, as second to it, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*. Now these Laws are as a Seal, or Mold, by which we are to be impress'd, and into which we are to be cast; and the Effect of them, or Impression receiv'd, is a Frame and Temper of Spirit, and Course of Action agreeable thereto. As for Instance, with reference to the first of these, *loving God with all the Heart, &c.* the Impression received

Deut. vi.
5.

Matt. xxii.
37.
Ver. 38.

ceived is, an Acknowledgment of God, his Being and Attributes; and Esteem of him as greatest and best; an Adherence to him as the Supreme Good; an entire Devotedness to his Service, and with respect to the other, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*, the Impression receiv'd carries in it, an Acknowledgment of his Rights, an equitable Construction of his Claims (putting our selves in his stead) of his Words, Actions, Pleas, with a Disposition always to do him Justice, and as we can, shew him Mercy.

The same may be observ'd of those general Maxims and Laws of our Saviour, (the great Foundation of all true Religion) *One thing is need- Luke x. ful. Seek first the Kingdom of God. Labour not 42. for the Meat that perishes, but for that which en- Matth. vi. dures to everlasting Life. What is a Man profited, 33. if he gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul; John vi. 27. or what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul? Matth. xvi. 26.* These are the great Laws of our Religion: They direct us in our Views, Choice, and Pursuits; representing eternal Things in their Reality and Importance; teaching us a Preference of them (an infinite Preference, if I may so say) to the little things of this little World. *One thing is needful! What shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?* Such a Maxim impress'd on the Heart, presently throws the World under Foot, and inscribes Vanity upon its greatest Glory! O, says the Christian thus impress'd, that I may secure my eternal Interest! *Lord, one thing have I desired of thee; thy loving Kindness is better than Life: Grant me thy self, tho' every thing else be denied me!* His Mind is rais'd above Time to Eternity, and help'd to look upon present and seen things with Shyness and Indifference. *Deus meus & omnia*, My God, and my All, is his

Language: Eternity is the Mark at which he levels.

There is a Variety of particular Moral and Divine Laws scatter'd up and down the Bible, by which the Heart of the Christian should be impress'd. A few of which I shall mention, and reduce them to three Heads, respecting God, our Neighbour, our selves. Such as respect God;

Pf. xxxi.

23.

Ib. xxxvii.

4.

Ib. xxxvii.

3, 5.

Pr. iii. 6.

2 Chr. xvi.

9.

Pf. ciii. 19.

Mat. iv. 10.

Eph. vi. 18.

Phil. iv. 6.

Levit. xix.

30.

Pf. xvi. 5.

6.

-lxxiii. 25.

1 Cor. xix.

31.

Pf. xvi. 8.

Mic. vi. 8.

Col. iii. 14.

Eph. iv.

31, 32.

Matth. xv.

44.

Eph. iv. ult.

Rom. xii.

21.

Tit. ii. 14.

Matt. v. 3.

-xi. 29.

as that we love him, that we fear him, that we trust in him, and commit all our Affairs into his Hands, that we own his Providence as universal and supreme, that we worship him, and him alone, by Prayer, Thanksgiving, Praise, &c. that we keep his *Sabbaths*, and reverence his *Sanctuary*, that we chuse him, and rest in him as our only Happiness, that we make his Glory our End in all our Actions, that we set him always before us.

Precepts respecting our Neighbour are, that we love him as our selves, as before; that we *do justly, love Mercy, put on Charity* towards him, a glorious Description of which we have, *1 Cor. xiii.* (Lord cast us into that Form, that Mold) that all Malice, Bitterness, &c. be put away, that we continue to love him, pray for him, and do him good, tho' an Enemy, that we forgive *one another, as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us*, that we *be not overcome of Evil, but overcome Evil with Good*. To which may be added the whole Class of relative Laws or Precepts, as I may call them, such as concern the Duties of Magistrates and Subjects, Ministers and People, Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants, &c.

Laws and Precepts concerning ourselves (or Self-Government) are, that we *live soberly*, that we be *poor in Spirit*, that we be *meek and lowly, humble*,

humble, careful for nothing, content with our Condition, that we be chaste, temperate in all things, that we deny ourselves, mortify the Flesh, be spiritually minded, watch and keep our Garments, that we redeem and improve our Time

Now, by these and such like Laws and Precepts, our Hearts and Spirits should be formed; and we should converse with our Bibles with an Eye hereto; endeavouring to get these, and all the rest of the divine Laws written on the Heart so as that there may be produced a Disposition and Temper, that in some measure answers them.

For Instance, to give a Specimen or two of what I mean: As to that Precept, *Fear the Lord all ye his Saints*: The correspondent or answerable

Impression is, *Reverence of the Great God, a Sense of his Authority over us, and Presence with us at all Times*;

Subjection of Soul to him, Care not to offend, ordering our Words, Thoughts and Actions as under his Eye. So as to that Precept, *Be clothed with Humility*;

the Impression received imports, *just Thoughts of our own Littleness, Guilt, and Vileness; a Conviction that we deserve not the least of God's Mercies; a meek and quiet Spirit under any Disappointments, Crosses, and Sufferings, as seeing our own Sin, and the Hand of God therein, whoever be the Instruments; Contentment with our Portion and Lot; preferring others before our selves, &c.*

The like might be shewn with regard to that Law (imply'd) *Temperate in all things*; referring, I suppose, to the right moderating and governing the Body, the bringing it into, and keeping it in Subjection; where the Impression receiv'd must include, *a Sense of the Dignity and Excellency of the Soul above the Body, and of the rational and divine Life above the animal Life, or Life of Sense; disposing to a constant Care to re-*

strain and moderate the Appetites, Passions, and Affections, with reference to Meat, Drink, Sleep, Recreations, and all worldly Enjoyments and bodily Pleasures; and this in Subserviency to the Interest of the Soul, and Advancement of the divine Life. To

Prov. iii. 6. *give one Instance more in that Precept, Acknowledge God in all thy ways; the Impression hence receiv'd (or what is produced in us thereby) is a Belief of God's Providence superintending, overruling and ordering all things; a Conviction of our own Insufficiency to direct and conduct our selves, and give Success to any of our Undertakings; a constant steady Dependance on God for Wisdom, Support, and a Blessing in what we do; a referring all things to God; a Desire to know and comply with his Will in every Action; Submission to his Will in all Events.*

These are some of the Precepts that will frequently occur to you in reading the Bible; and in such a way as I have here exemplified, should they impress the Heart. O endeavour that they may do so: Remember God has promis'd it, as the special Privilege of the New-Testament-Church, that *he will write his Law in their Hearts.* Plead this Promise, and wait for the Accomplishment of it particularly when solemnly reading the Scriptures, in a way of Worship: And when any thing offers, of more special Concernment to you, look up to God; beg a Touch of the divine Spirit: Lord, say you, write this Law in my Heart, and keep it upon the Thoughts of the Imagination of my Heart for ever.

5. There are sundry Evangelical Laws and Precepts, strictly and properly so, which we should endeavour to get our Hearts impress'd by; as, John xiv. 1. — xvi. 26. believing in Christ, praying in the Name of Christ, Col. iii. 17. doing all in his Name, depending upon his Merit, 2 Tim. ii. 2. Grace, and Intercession, looking for Acceptance Heb. ii. 14, 16. in

in him, and him alone, not grieving nor quenching Eph. i. 6.
the Spirit. The Evangelical Impression answering 1 Thes. v. 30.
to such Laws, is *a Conviction that Jesus is the* 19.
Messiah; a Persuasion of the Necessity and Usefulness
of his Office as Mediator; an Apprehension of our
own Guilt, Weakness, Misery; a Consent to his
Government; a relying on him in his whole Office:
And, with reference to the Spirit, *accepting his*
Help, cherishing his Influences, as a Spirit of Con-
viction, Illumination, Prayer, Holiness, Conduct,
Comfort and Sealing, committing ourselves to him in
all our Work and Walk.

6. Let me add, that the great Laws and Rules
of practical Religion, contained in the *Bible*, are
exemplified, many of them, in the Lives of holy
Men there recorded; where you may view them
with Advantage, and from whence you should
endeavour to transcribe them into your own
Hearts and Lives: They are exemplified most
eminently in the Life of the blessed Jesus. How
constant his Acknowledgment of God and Pro-
vidence, and Dependence thereon? How prayer-
ful and devout was he? How diligent and zealous
in his Work? How faithful in his Office? How
submissive to the Father's Will? How devoted
to his Name and Honour? How compassionate,
charitable and kind? How forbearing towards
his Enemies? and towards his Friends? How
sedate and composed in the midst of Hurries, In-
sults, and Applauses? being never transported in
an unseemly manner, but always having a full
Possession of himself. In a Word, he was holy,
harmless, undefil'd, without Sin, and without
Guile.

And tho' there never was so bright an Example,
as that of Christ's; who was not only a perfect
Man, but more than a Man; *God manifest in the*

Pf. xxii.
18, 19.
John xii.
27.
Matt. xiv.
23.
Mark i. 35.
Luke vi.
12.
John iv.
32, 34.
Heb. ii. 17.
Rev. i. 5.
Luke xxii.
42.
John viii.
10.

— xii. 27.
28.
Matth. xv.
32.

Luke xxiii. 34. *Flesh*: Yet we have other Examples highly instructive, in which the Word of Life was held forth with some Eminency; as the Example of Mat. xxvi. 41. *Moses*, the *Apostles*, *Prophets*, &c. How meek — xii. 19. was *Moses*? How patient was *Job*? How devout Heb. vii. 26. was *David*? How zealous and heavenly-minded St. *Paul*? How manifestly did all of them (besides their more peculiar and appropriate Excellencies) appear under the Power and Influence of the Religion they profess'd? How evidently were such Laws as I have mention'd, impress'd on their Hearts, and shewn in their Conversations?

I might instance in the *Patriarchs*, *Moses* and others, in the Catalogue of Saints we have in the 11th of *Hebrews*. *Moses*, when he came to Years, in the Strength and Vigour of his Age, bravely despis'd the Preferments and Glory of a Court, preferring even Persecution among God's People thereto; and all on that great Principle, so much recommended by our Lord, *a Belief and Value of eternal Things*. He had respect to the Heb. xi. 24, 25. *Recompence of Reward*. So those primitive Confessors, they took joyfully the spoiling of their — x. 34. Goods, knowing in themselves they had a better and more enduring Substance. How brave a Part did *Daniel* and the three Children act in the Court of a Pagan Monarch? *We will not worship thy Image, O King*, say they; *the God whom we serve is able to deliver us*, &c. 'Tis plain the Laws concerning fearing, trusting, worshipping their God, had taken deep hold of them; they fear'd not the Wrath of the King, as is said of *Moses*, but endured, as seeing him that is invisible: And how much of Christ's Law and Gospel did that great Minister of it bear in his Heart? the Apostle *Paul*, I mean; I desire, says he, to know nothing

nothing but *Christ, and him crucified*; and again, ^{2 Cor. ii. 2.} *None of these things move me, neither count I my Life* ^{Acts xx. 24.} *dear, so I may finish my Course with Joy.*

But I must not further pursue the Argument, but refer the Reader to the History of Scripture, where he will find himself *compass'd about with a Cloud of Witnesses*, all bearing Testimony to the Truth and Excellency of God's Law, and acting under the Authority and Influence thereof, as those that had receiv'd it into their Hearts, as a governing vital Principle. Indeed their Examples were not perfect; they had not fully transcrib'd the great Rule, and therefore are to be followed with Caution and Reserve: But so far as they had attained and appeared to have copied out the divine Law, we should copy after them: And it will be of considerable use to us, to view the Transcript of the divine Law in the Lives of the Saints, tho' less perfect than the Original it self. Look therefore to those holy Men that have gone before you, and *look to Jesus the Author and Finisher of your Faith*, desiring and endeavouring, that the same Spirit may be in you that was in them: Mind your Pattern, the Divine Law, *chiefly and mostly*; but you may sometimes also profitably mind those who were eminent Proficients in it. But I must check my self: If I have drawn out the Discourse too long on this and the foregoing Head, and made them disproportionate to the rest, the Importance of the Matter must be my Excuse. The Law of God sanctifies and saves (as a Means) not as written in the Bible with Ink, but as written in the Heart by the Spirit of the living God: In the one Place 'tis a dead Letter, in the other a vital Principle: And O that it may be thus written, more and more written in all our Hearts!

S E C T. IV.

Of practising and applying Scripture to our selves: Of the Affections to be exercis'd in reading, &c.

Sixthly, Make a faithful Application of what you read to your own Souls, as there is Occasion; look into the Perfect Law of Liberty, not Jam. i. 22. as forgetful *Hearers* or Readers, but *Doers of the Word*. Practice should be the End of all our reading; the Scriptures were wrote that we *sin not*, and we should read them, that we might thence learn our Duty, and be directed into the way of Life. “ The Scripture will be read with the “ greatest Profit, says *Erasmus*, if, when a “ Man takes it into his Hand, it be with this “ Mind, *ut seipso reddatur melior*, &c. that he may “ become a better Man, and does not accommo- “ date the Gospel to his own Affections, but cor- “ rect his own Life, and all his Desires, by the “ Rule of it.” The Bible is a *Doctrine according* 1 Tim. vi. 3. to *Godliness*, 'tis profitable for *Correction*, for *In-* 2—iii. 15. *struction in Righteousness*. But then you must use and apply it for this Purpose; compare your selves with it, and judge your selves by it. 16.

As for Instance, when you find your selves condemned by the Word, *i. e.* that your Temper, Practice, Conduct is contrary thereto, apply the Censure, take the Reproof to your selves, and receive it for your Correction and Instruction; and if you note it down in your *Diary*, recording both the Time, Chapter, and Verse, it may be an Advantage to you. Suppose, for Example, the Secti-
on

on or Portion of Scripture you read be, *Psal. xv.* where you have the Character of a good Man, viz. *That he walketh uprightly, worketh Righteousness and speaketh the Truth in his Heart; that he backbiteth not with his Tongue, &c.*—If you are conscious you want Reproof or Correction upon any of these Heads, make the Application with all Faithfulness; and let there be a Remark in your Diary, referring to this Matter (if you see Reason for it, as having been highly defective in these Particulars) with the Time when, and such Reflections as you made upon it.

7. Read the Scripture with pure Intentions, and Minds free from Prejudice, Prepossession and Byass, as far as possible: We are to *lay aside all Filthiness, and Superfluity of Naughtiness* (every Passion, Lust, Corruption, every human Regard and worldly Consideration) that we may *receive the ingrafted Word*. All Rule, Authority, and Power, (to allude to that, *1 Cor. xv.*) must be put down, and every carnal Thought brought in Subjection to the Word. We should always desire to know the Truth, and be willing any thing should be true, that we find so, whatever Interest or human Authority it may contradict: We must not interpret Scripture by preconceived Opinions, or any Scheme of Doctrines we have embraced, without sufficient Examination, which we may call the *Analogy of Faith*. This may lead us off the only true Foundation, and introduce a *Rabbi*, or Master on Earth, which our great Lord and Master in Heaven has caution'd us against. A Christian, *as such*, is subject to the only Lord that bought him; and we should often remember with what Solemnity his Authority was recommended to the Church, when he appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration, in his *Shechinah*,

Jam. i. 21.

Mat. xvii. *Shedbinab*, and a Voice came from the excellent
5. Glory, *This is my beloved Son, hear ye him.*

O endeavour to be steddly and resolved in this great Point: Let not human Authority or worldly Views, make Comments on the Bible for you, chuse your Religion, form your Articles of Faith,

John v. 44. or modify your Profession: *How can you believe, (saith Christ) which receive Honour one of another, and seek not the Honour that cometh from God only?*

We shou'd read the Bible with the same Temper the Apostle, when struck to the Ground by the

A&ts ix. 6. Light from Heaven, put that Question, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Too many are resolved what to believe, and what to do, before they

e Disputing is not the Business of this practical Discourse, or it would be easy to produce numerous Testimonies, both ancient and modern, for the Authority of Scripture as *our only Rule*; notwithstanding 'tis with so much Difficulty we admit it as such, when brought to the Trial. I shall, however, insert a few Passages to this Purpose from some of the early Writers of the Church, whose Sentiments, on other Occasions, are wont to carry considerable Weight.

Hom. 13. on " Is it not absurd, says *Chrysostom*, that, having to deal in
2 Cor. vii. " Money-Matters, Men will not trust to others, but the
" Counters are brought out and they cast up the Sum; but
" in the Matters of their Souls, are led and drawn aside
" by the Opinions of other Men, and this, when they
Vid. Dr. Pa- " have an exact Scale (wherein to weigh all things) and
trick's Search " an exact Rule or Square (whereby to measure them) the
the Script. " Dictate of the divine Laws? Therefore, I beseech and
p. 60. " entreat you all, that not minding *what such or such a*
" *Man saith* about these things, you would consult the
" holy Scriptures concerning them." To the same Pur-
pose the Emperor *Constantine*, in his Speech in the Coun-
cil of *Nice*, *Ευαγγελικαὶ Βίβλοι καὶ Ἀποστολικαὶ καὶ*
τῶν παλαιῶν Προφητῶν τὰ Θεσπίσματα, &c. " The
lib. 1. c. 6. " Books of the Evangelists and Apostles, and the Prophe-
" tic Oracles, plainly inform us what Opinions and Senti-
" ments to entertain concerning God; wherefore all un-
friendly

Theodor. " Books of the Evangelists and Apostles, and the Prophe-
Hist. Eccl. tic Oracles, plainly inform us what Opinions and Senti-
lib. 1. c. 6. ments to entertain concerning God; wherefore all un-
friendly

they consult their Master, or examine their Rule: And therefore either neglect the Bible, hating the Light, lest their Deeds should be reprov'd; like the *Florentine* Physician, that could not be persuaded to look on the Heavens thro' a Telescope, lest it shou'd make him stagger concerning *Aristotle's* Principles, which, said he, I am resolv'd to maintain as long as I live: Or if they at all converse with their Bible, it is but in Complement, and out of Custom; they don't pay a due Subjection to it, as the only Rule of their Faith and Practice, but wrest it in favour of their Prejudices, Honour, Interests, and Lusts; they read it with Spectacles of colour'd Glass, which makes it appear just as they wou'd have it, according to the *Medium* thro' which they behold it. But this is not to receive the Word, *as it is indeed the Word of God*, nor will you have the Comfort and Advantage of the holy Scripture, till you have learnt to treat it with more Reverence, and every Interest and Affection be made to stoop to the Authority of it.

8. Read

"friendly Contention being laid aside, let us proceed to debate and prove the Things in question *from the sacred Writings.*" And well had it been for the Church, had that Council, and all other succeeding, taken his Advice. Says another; Μη Μοιλογισμούς καὶ Συλλογισμούς ἀν- Theodor. θρωπίνους προσενέγκης, &c. Don't offer Reasons and Dial. 1.
 "Arguments *human*, and that are drawn from the Authority of Men; I believe and obey *only the holy Scripture.*" So *Basil*, "Let the divinely inspired Scripture Ep. 80.
 "determine the whole Controversy among us." And this is the Language of all Antiquity receiv'd with Applause in Protestant Churches; being indeed the very Foundation on which they stand; and yet how often forgotten upon Occasion!

8. Read with suitable Affections: *An honest Heart* is requisite, and partly implied in what was said before; the Seed of God's Word must be receiv'd into *good Ground*, Humility and Teachableness of Mind is also requisite: *Unless you become as little Children, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Christ was anointed to preach glad Tidings to the Meek. They only will value the Bible, and learn of Christ, who are meek, and not puff'd up with the Conceit of their own Wisdom and Sufficiency, but are pliable and teachable. The Law of God makes wise the *simple*, says the Psalmist. The Word in the Original literally signifies, one that is easily persuaded, and in this Place may intend the *bumble*; such as are sensible of their own Weakness and Infirmary; of their Need of divine Instruction, and readily embrace it. *Austin* (in his 56th Epistle) directing *Dioscorus* how to come to the Knowledge of the Truth, tells him, "There is no way to attain it, but what God, who knows our Infirmary, has appointed; and that way is, *first* Humility, *secondly* Humility, *thirdly* Humility; adding, "Shou'dst thou ask me never so often about the way, I could make no other Answer: Not but that there are other Precepts which concern Religion; but, unless in all the Good we do, Humility go before it, attend it, and follow after it, *totum extorquet de manu superbia*, Pride and Vanity will ruin all. And therefore, as *Demosthenes*, being ask'd what was the chief Precept of Eloquence, answered, *Pronunciation*; and what the next, answer'd, *Pronunciation*; what the third, still answer'd, *Pronunciation*: So shou'd you ask me never so often concerning the great Laws of the Christian Religion, I have nothing to answer, but *Humility, Humility*." ty.

Luke viii.

15.

Mat. xviii.

3.

Pl. xix. 7.

ty. O! endeavour for this *first, second*, this great and most important capital Grace; particularly in reading the holy Scriptures. *To this Man will I look*, says God, *that is poor: Receive with Meekness the ingrafted Word: With the lowly is Wisdom.* Ifa. lxvi. 2. Jam. i. 21. Prov. xi. 2. Mat. xi. 25. The great things of the Gospel are *hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed to Babes.*

Further, Read with Reverence: Consider God speaks to you in his Word; and therefore, to allude to that Passage, *Put off your Shoes, for the place wherein you stand is holy Ground.* Exod. iii. 5. All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God; and when you read it, especially in a way of Worship, you should carefully preserve an Awe and Reverence upon your Minds. Consider, you are not conversing with the Word of God only, but with God in his Word: Accordingly represent God to your self, *set him before you*, and receive the Instructions and Admonitions that are here given, form the Purposes and Resolutions that are proper on this Occasion, *as in his Presence*, and under his Eye.

Further endeavour, that your Affections may answer the particular Subjects, which may occur in reading. When you are conversant with Threatnings, with Judgments, with the Terrors of the Lord; an holy Fear and Dread shou'd possess your Minds, especially if you find your selves in any measure struck at therein. Good *Josiah* rent 2 Kin. xxii. his Clothes at reading the Law, *Noah* receiv'd 11. Heb. xi. 7. the Warning and Threatening of an approaching Deluge with Fear which put him upon preparing an Ark for the saving of himself and his House: And you know the *Prophet* gives this as the Character of the most acceptable Worshipper, *that he trembles at God's Word.* When you Ifa. lxvi. 2. are conversant with the glad Tidings of the Gospel,

Gospel, the Promises of Life and Salvation by a Redeemer; Love, Joy, and Gratitude, Praise, &c. are the proper Affections.

In short, the Scripture contains Subjects so important in themselves, and of such Concernment to us, that it should not be read in a dull manner, and without some Warmth of Affection. As the Disciples Hearts burnt within them whilst Christ opened the Scriptures, so ours should glow and burn when we read them; and indeed, herein, in part, consists the Difference we should put between *divine* and *common* Writings: We are to worship God by the Exercise of devout Affections, while we converse with his Word; imitating what's said of Venerable *Bede* (for nothing more venerable than this) *that he often shed Tears when he read the holy Scriptures.*

9. Make constant and present Use of the Scriptures you read: Don't only entertain your Minds speculatively with the Truths of them, but refer them to After-use; as in the Devotion you may be now engag'd in; where the Portion of Scripture you have been upon, will ordinarily supply you with Matter for Meditation and Prayer, as well as prepare the Mind for it. Use it also in time of Temptation, as Christ you know did, and in your common Business and Converse. As the Word of Christ is *to dwell in you*, so it should accompany you wheresoever you go, and in whatever you are about, giving Laws to your Thoughts, Words, and Actions; sanctifying your common Employments, and conducting you in the Management of 'em. Use it also for your Refreshment, Support and Comfort throughout the Day: *Bind the Commandment continually*, says Solomon, *upon thine Heart, and tie it about thy Neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep*

Matth. iv.
10.

Prov. vi.
21, 22.

keep thee; and when thou wakest, it shall talk with thee. You may often turn aside in the Day, and review in your Thoughts something of the last Chapter or Psalm you read in your Oratory; especially when any thing occurs in Providence, that he makes it more than ordinarily suitable to you: As the good Man delights in the Law of the Lord, so he meditates therein Day and Night. *Pf. i. 120.* And *David* tells you, that God's Statutes were his Songs in the House of his Pilgrimage. *Songs — cxix. 54.* with him by Night. You should read God's *— xlii. 8.* Word for daily Service, and have frequent Recourse to it, when alone, or in Company, and at all times, as Occasion requires.

10. Depend on God, and beg his Spirit for your Assistance and Help in all this Work; I mean, to understand, apply, and improve his Word as you have been directed. How successful and devout a Student was *David* in the holy Scriptures? How great a Proficient therein? He tells you he lov'd it, that it was his Meditation all the Day, and that hereby he was wiser than his Enemies, than the Ancients, than all his Teachers. And yet you often find him putting up *— cxix.* his Petitions for further Light and Instruction; *97, 98, 99.* as, *Open thou mine eyes, that I may see wondrous* *Ver. 18.* *things out of thy Law.* "Here, as the excellent

"Mr. *How* remarks, he supposes many undiscover'd Wonders, which more open Eyes might in God, *He*

"yet behold in that external Revelation of God's *P. 31.*

"Mind, which was then afforded (and which was

"wont in those Days to go under the Name of

"his Law, tho' it contain'd Histories, Prophecies,

"and Promises, as well as Precepts.) Although

"he was no Stranger to those Records, nor little

"insighted into them, he yet apprehended a Need

"of more Light and better Eyes; which he

F

"therefore

“ therefore desires. ” And to the same Purpose
 Ver. 27. he prays, *Make me to understand the way of thy*
 Ver. 33. *Precepts.* And again, *Teach me, O Lord, the*
way of thy Statutes: Requests he often repeats.
 Let us imitate this great and good Man, and depend on God and his Spirit for Light, Instruction, and Influence in reading his Word. Not that we are to expect a *new Light*, as that signifies a new Revelation and Rule, either distinct from, or supplemental to the Scripture Rule; nor are we to lay aside our Reason and Understanding, relying upon an immediate *Afflatus* and Inspiration in reading and interpreting Scripture, which wou’d be downright Enthusiasm: Notwithstanding I doubt not we may, consistent with the greatest Sobriety, expect and look for the Spirit’s Help in reading the Bible, and in order to a suitable Improvement of it. The Spirit was promis’d to
 Joh. xiv. abide with the Church for ever, as for other
 16. Purposes, so for a *Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation*
 Eph. i. 17. *in the Knowledge of Christ, (i. e.)* of internal Revelation, opening the Eyes of the Understanding. Nor will you ever know the Truths of Christ, and of the Bible, so as to feel the Power, Influence, and Authority of them upon the Heart and Conscience, without *Internal Revelation*, and unless the Spirit open the Eyes and Heart.

There is indeed a Knowledge of, and Assent to divine Truths, (*i. e.* to the Propositions contained in Scripture) which a Person may have without any special Help of the Spirit, and is sometimes attain’d by Men of Parts and Letters, tho’ unsanctify’d, in a Degree of Eminency above what even true Christians, of lower Capacities, can ordinarily attain. But this Knowledge and Assent is speculative, resteth in the Head, and does not descend into the Heart, transforming and
 changing

changing that : And therefore such Persons are
 said not to know : Not to believe. The Know-
 ledge and Faith they have is ineffectual, a lifeless
 and dead thing, and in God's Account a Nullity.

Isa. i. 3, 4.

Jer. ix. 3.

Num. xiv.

11.

Pl. cvi. 24.

“ That Knowledge, Apprehension, and Faith, Pag. 36.

“ says the foremention'd Author, which is the

“ only Product of the external Revelation, even

“ recommended by the most advantageous con-

“ vincing Circumstance, is too faint to command

“ the Soul. Who amongst all the People of the

“ *Jews*, at Mount *Horeb*, could have any Doubt

“ but the Authority that avouch'd the Law there

“ given them, was divine? And yet how bold-

“ ly do they rush into Idolatry, against the ex-

“ press Letter of that Law, while the Sound of

“ that dreadful *Voice of Words*, which delivered

“ it, could hardly, one wou'd think, be well

“ out of their Ears; and tho' they could not

“ doubt of God's Authority, yet, for all that,

“ their frequent Rebellions are plainly resolved

“ into their Infidelity : *How long will this People* Num. xiv.

“ *provoke me; how long will it be e'er they believe* 4

“ *me?*” He adds, “ Whatever way a Man

“ comes to be certain of any thing, that hath a

“ contrary Tendency to the Bent of his habitual-

“ ly wicked Heart, he needs more than the Evi-

“ dence of the Truth of the thing to make it

“ efficaciously determine his Will against his for-

“ mer vicious Course. In short, says he, Faith Pag. 39.

“ is a Part of Homage pay'd to the Great God,

“ which is to be estimated sincere, according as

“ it answers the End for which the things to be

“ believed were revealed : That End is not to

“ beget only the Notion of those things, as

“ Truths that are to be lodg'd in the Mind, and

“ go no further; as if they were to be under-

“ stood true, only that they might be so under-

“ stood ; but that the Person might accordingly
 “ have his Spirit form’d, and might shape the
 “ Course of his whole Conversation. Therefore
 “ it is call’d the *Obedience* of Faith ; and the same
 “ Word which is wont to be rendred *Unbelief*,
 “ signifies Disobedience, Obstinacy, Unper-
 “ suadableness, being from a Theme which sig-
 “ nifies to *persuade*. So that then this Homage is
 “ given to the eternal God, when his Revelation
 “ is comply’d with, and submitted to, *according*
 “ *to the true Intent* and Purpose of it ; which that
 “ it may be, requires that the Spirit urge the
 “ Soul with his Authority, and over-power it to
 “ an awful Subjection thereto. ’Tis necessary
 “ (by reason of the Apostacy) that the enlight-
 “ ning Communication, which he transmits in-
 “ to the Soul, be not only so clear, as to scat-
 “ ter the Darkness that clouded the Mind ; but
 “ *so penetrating*, as to strike and pierce the Heart,
 “ and render it capable of a new Form and
 “ Frame : In order whereto, God, that at *first*
 “ *commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness*,
 “ is said to have *shined into the Hearts*, (*viz.* of
 “ them whom he renews) *to give the Light of the*
 “ *Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of*
 “ *Jesus Christ.*”

2 Cor. iv.
 6.

1 Joh. v.
 20.

He shines on the Heart, enlightens the Mind
 at the first Conversion, and further shines upon
 it afterwards by his Spirit : He *has given us an*
Understanding, says the Apostle, *that we may*
know him who is true. He not only gives us a Re-
 velation of him, but *an Understanding to know*
him : And this is what I am now advising you to
 seek and wait for, (*viz.*) the special Illumination,
 Help, and Influence of the Spirit. I can’t doubt
 but it belongs to the stated Office of the *Para-*
clete, to assist the Members of the Church, in
 reading

reading and interpreting the Christian Revelation, and improving the Bible, and you should depend on him for this Purpose. Beg his Presence and Influence when you are going to read his Word, and intermix frequent Ejaculations with your reading. *Lord, say you, teach me to profit, seal Instruction; write thy Laws in my Heart by thy Spirit, cause thy Word to dwell richly in me, &c.*

If there be any, to whom such a Strain of Discourse is not grateful, I shall leave them to their own Apprehensions; only desire their Dissent may be with more Modesty than is usual; and that they would not take upon them to prescribe to, or censure others with the Air of Dictators. In the mean time, as I look upon this Doctrine to be of the utmost Importance, so I think it my Duty to assert it, and plead for it on all Occasions. Take away the Influences of the Holy Spirit from the Members of the Church, and the Christian Religion, the Gospel of Christ, will remain little else than a sublime Speculation, a System of refin'd Morals, as ineffectual to change Hearts, and reform the World, as the Heathen Philosophy. The Holy Spirit, the *Paraclete*, is the *Sceebinah*, as I may say, the Glory of the New Testament-Church: Learn to depend on him, on his Influence and Grace in the whole of his Office; and let me add, the more entire and close your Dependance is, the better you are like to succeed in your Profession of Religion, and particularly in a devout Conversation with the Bible.

S E C T. V.

Containing two Arguments for the Reading and Improving the Holy Scriptures in the Manner prescrib'd : (viz.) The Command of God, and Practice of the Church.

HAVING shewn you in what Method, and with what Affection you are to converse with your Bible in your Retirement, and how to make the reading of the Scripture a profitable Part of divine Worship (in which I have said the more, because several things have occur'd a little out of the way even of the more serious Christians Devotion, that are not sufficiently understood, and yet I apprehend of the greatest Consequence) I shall now, in the *second Place*, offer some Considerations to inforce this Duty upon you, (*viz.*) The diligent devout reading of the Bible in your Oratories. And,

1. Consider, for this Purpose, the *Command of God*. It was required of the *King of Israel*,
 Deut. xvii. that *he should write him a Copy of the Law in a*
 18, 19. *Book, that it should be with him, and that he*
should read therein all the Days of his Life. And the Reason upon which he was to do this, extends the Duty further, and lays the Obligation upon all, *viz. That he may learn to fear the Lord his God.* All are concern'd to fear the Lord, and therefore are to read his Word, which teaches his Fear. And 'tis observable, that as he was to read in the Law, all the Days of his Life, so he's enjoined to *write him a Copy of it*; which the
Jews

Jews say, was to be done with his own Hand, as a Means to fix it the more in his Mind. Some of the *Rabbies* add, that every private Man was bound to write himself a Copy of the Law; and if the *King* had done it whilst a private Person, he was obliged to do it over again, when he came to the Throne. The same Charge is given, *This Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy Mouth*, Josh. i. 8. *but thou shalt meditate therein Day and Night, that thou mayst observe according to all that is written therein.* Nor were Rulers only, but the whole Body of the People oblig'd to read and study the Law: How expresse that Injunction to the whole *Israelitish* Nation? *And these Words which I command thee this Day shall be in thy Heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy Children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy House, and when thou walkest by the way, &c.* They were to read the Words of the Law, learn and digest them themselves, and teach them to others. It follows, *And thou shalt bind them for a ^f Sign upon thy Hand, and they shall be as Frontlets between thine Eyes, and thou shalt write them upon*

Deut. vi. 6, 7.
Ver. 8, 9.

F 4 the

^f Whether this Precept be literally, or figuratively to be understood, has been disputed among learned Men. The *Jews* take it literally, and hereon ground their Doctrine and Practice concerning their *Phylacteries*, &c. with all the Superstitions referring thereto. Some Christian Divines also contend for the literal Sense: Dr. *Wotton* particularly, in his Discourse of the Authority and Usefulness of the *Misnab*; where he endeavours to prove, that the daily Recital of the *Schema* (as the *Jews* call it, *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord*) the Use of *Phylacteries*, and Schedules upon Gates and Door-posts, were required of the *Jews* in the Law of *Moses*, and were no Invention of their own. Of the same Opinion is *Surenhusius*, who has, with great Labour, collected the *Jewish Misnab*, and given an entire Translation of it in five Volumes in *Folio*. The Form and Manner of these *Phylacteries*,

Déut. xi.
18.

the Posts of thy House, and upon thy Gates, (i. e.) be familiarly conversant with them, lay them up in the *Heart and Soul*: Or, as it is in a parallel Place, hold them before thy Eyes, and imprint them in thy Memory, so as never to forget them.

Joh. v. 39.
Luke xvi.
26.

In the *New Testament* the Command is frequent: *Search the Scriptures*, says our Saviour. *They have Moses and the Prophets*, says Abraham in the Parable of the rich Man (requesting a Messenger might be sent from the Dead to warn his Brethren) *let them hear them, (i. e.)* let them consult their Writings; (for *Moses* and the Prophets were dead long since) let them read the written Word, and learn the Doctrine of Salvation from thence. And we find the Apostle recommending the Scriptures to the *Ephesians*, as

Eph. vi.
17.
Coloss. iii.
16.

a most useful Piece of Armour: *Take the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God*. To the same Purpose, *Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all Wisdom; ἐνοικέτω*: Let it be an Inhabitant in the Soul; not only stand in the Bible, but dwell in the Heart, and that copiously, and in

libraries, and of what Passages of Scripture they consisted, he gives a particular Account of, Part I. p. 9. But the whole favours so much of *Rabbinical Whim*, and makes them look so much like *Amulets*, that methinks 'tis not easy to believe they owe their Original to the divine Appointment (especially in that Form of them). But the most, I think, of Christian Writers, incline to the figurative and metaphorical Sense, which is sufficient to my Purpose; as importing the Obligation the *Jews* were hereby laid under to a careful Perusal and Study of their Law. Dr. *Patrick* takes it to be a Proverbial Speech; *Thou shalt bind them for a Sign upon thy Hand, (i. e.)* carefully remember them: He observes, that just thus God commands them to preserve the Memory of their Deliverance out of the Land of *Egypt*, and almost in the same Words, *Exod. xiii. 9, 16.*

in great Abundance. Now consider these Precepts, either as the Injunctions of a Sovereign, or the Advice of a Friend, they ought not to be neglected: 'Tis enough that so wise and kind a Being (One that knows and loves us better than we do our selves) recommends to us the diligent Study of his Word: We may conclude from hence 'tis our Interest. But he has Right to prescribe to us; his Will signify'd makes our Duty, nor may we dispute his Authority, tho' we knew not its Tendency to promote our Happiness.

2. As this is God's Command, so it has been the Practice of the Church, both Jewish and Christian, in all Ages: Good and devout Men have ever had a Veneration for the holy Scriptures; *I have esteem'd the Words of thy Mouth, says Job,* Job xxiii. *more than my necessary Food.* Such was his Value for a Revelation from Heaven! And yet how little was he favoured with, compared with our Bible? He lived in the Patriarchal Age, and probably had no System of written Laws; knew nothing of *Moses* and the Prophets; had only (beside the Law natural, written in the Heart) the Benefit of some Traditions from *Adam*, *Noah*, and others; and occasional Revelations by Dreams, Visions, &c. But he found the Necessity and Comfort of Instruction from above, and therefore most affectionately embraces even the obscurer Hints and Intimations that were afforded him.

It was the special Advantage of the *Jews*, that to them were committed the Oracles of God; and how they priz'd and us'd them, we need not be ignorant. *David* makes it the Character of the blessed and pious Man, that his Delight is in the Law of the Lord, and that therein he meditates Day and Night. And how much there was of this in his

Pf. xix. 8. his own Temper, he himself informs us. *The Statutes of the Lord, says he, are right, rejoicing the Heart; more to be desired than Gold, yea than much fine Gold: Sweeter also than Honey and the Honey-comb, I have rejoiced in the way of thy Testimonies, as much as in all Riches. My Soul breaketh for the longing that it hath to thy Judgments at all times; thy Testimonies are also my Delight, and my Counsellors. O how love I thy Law! it is my Meditation all the Day.* And again, *How sweet are thy Words to my Taste; yea sweeter than Honey to my Mouth.* And in the same Strain he goes on through the Psalm, which is mostly employed upon the Subject, displaying the Excellency of God's Word, and his own Delight therein.

Nor was this only the Temper of their more eminent Saints, but reckon'd, in a great Measure, essential to the Religion of a Jew; insomuch that their Children were train'd up in the Reading and Study of the Law from their very Infancy. As soon as they can speak, says *Buxtorf*, the Jewish Children are taught to write some Sentences of Scripture: And one of their own Authors, mention'd by *Wagenfeil*, tells us, they begin with that Text, *Moses commanded us a Law, even the Inheritance of the Congregation of Jacob.* This every Father was bound to teach his Son, as soon as he could speak; designing hereby, 'tis likely, to instill a Veneration for the Law among their first Notions: The Law is our Inheritance, not the World, not *Canaan*! So that it was not altogether extraordinary, which we read of *Timothy*; *That from a Child he knew the holy Scriptures; but a thing of common Attainment: And something of the like Zeal for the Scriptures continued among them after their greatest Apostacies in other Instances.* "Ask one of our Nation, saith *Josephus*,

“ *Josephus*, concerning the Law, he will tell
 “ you all things more readily than his own
 “ Name; for learning them as soon as we come
 “ to have any Knowledge of things, we preserve
 “ them deeply engraven on our Minds.” To the
 like Purpose is that of *Ribera*, who tells us, “ He
 “ was acquainted with a *Jew* at *Salamanca*, of
 “ whom he enquired about several things, both
 “ in the Historical and Prophetical Books of
 “ Scripture; but, says he, he stopt me im-
 “ mediately upon the first Mention of them, and
 “ repeated them all himself without Book in the
 “ *Hebrew* Tongue; which I relating to another Patrick’s
 “ *Jew*, that was become Christian, he told me Search the
 “ that it was no Wonder, for they committed Scriptures.
 “ all these things to Memory from their Child-
 “ hood.” Nay, so superstitious were they in this
 Affair, that they placed a sort of Religion in
 numbering the Verses, Words, and even Letters
 of every Book; which was the Province of the
Masorets, whence they had the Name of *Sopherim*,
 or Numbers.

And how Matters stood in the Christian Church
 with reference hereto, History informs us: *Apollos*
 was mighty in the Scriptures. The *Beræans* searched Acts xviii.
 the Scriptures daily; which, as it was a Means of 24.
 bringing them to embrace Christianity; so, no — xvii. 11.
 question, ’twas their Practice afterwards. The
 primitive Confessors had that Value for their
 Bible, that no Terrors could prevail with them
 to part with it, and resign it to the Fury of their
 Enemies. They would give their Bodies to be
 burnt, rather than their sacred Books, when de-
 manded of them by the heathen Persecutors;
 which was a Trial we know they actually under-
 went: And those that comply’d in the Hour of
 Temptation, were call’d *Traditores* (because they
 deliver’d

deliver'd up their Bibles) a Name of the greatest Infamy, and the Crime thought so heinous, that the guilty could scarce ever after be restored to the Peace of the Church. And surely they who preserved their Bibles at so great a Hazard, must have had a considerable Value for them, and would not neglect them. 'Tis said of *Tertullian*, that he was taken up Night and Day in reading the Scriptures, that he got much of them by Heart, and that so exactly, that he knew each Period. *St. Austin* tells us, that, after his Conversion, the Scriptures were the Matter of his most pure and chaste Delight, in respect whereof all other Books (even his once admired *Cicero*) became dry and unfavoury to him. *Theodosius* the younger could repeat any Part of the Scriptures exactly; and was wont to discourse out of them, with the *Bishops* that were at Court, as readily as if he had been an old Bishop himself. *St. Jerom* says of *Origen*, that he never went to Meals, without some Part of Scripture read; never to sleep, till some about him had read them to him. *Eusebius* says, he heard one, who had his Eyes burnt out in the *Dioclesian* Persecution, repeat *memoriter* the Scriptures in a large Assembly, as if he had been reading out of a Book. *St. Jerom* tells of *Nopotian*, that, by daily Reading and Meditation, he had made his Soul a Library of Christ: And should I descend to more modern Instances, how many might be found of the like Temper? *Zuinglius* wrote out *St. Paul's* Epistles and got them by Heart. *Beza* could repeat them in *Greek* at fourscore Years of Age, having learnt them in his Youth. 'Tis said of *Cranmer* and *Ridley* (those renown'd Martyrs) that they had got the New Testament by Heart, the one in his Journey to *Rome*,

Vide *Cave's*
Prim. Christianity, P. I.
p. 268, &c.

Rome, the other in the Walks of *Pembroke-Hall* in *Cambridge*.

And if these Examples be thought extraordinary, I might produce a Multitude of others more upon the common Level, enforcing the same Duty upon us. Some have read the Bible throughout above twenty times a Year, some ten times, some five, some three. That Ornament of his Age and Country, the Honourable Mr. *Robert Boyle*, after all the Reputation he had got by his Philosophick Studies, and some Composures of Wit, professes the Scriptures were his most honoured and beloved Subject. “ I wou’d bring my self, says he, to
“ prefer the least Sprig of the Tree of Life to a
“ whole Wood of Bays; and am inclin’d to
“ think, that a Christian may find a higher Satisfaction in persuading Men to pay Praises,
“ than in receiving them from all the World besides.” And so great was his Value for Scripture-Knowledge, that he took all Opportunities to enrich his mind with it. ’Tis said of him, that if he met with any Hints in Conversation with his learned Friends, which he thought a good Illustration of a difficult Text of Scripture, he wou’d request to have them in Writing. And the like Veneration for the sacred Scriptures, the like Esteem for them, and Delight in them, has been found in Hundreds and thousands more; indeed in all the true and genuine Members of the Church, according to the Measure of their Attainments.

And how much of Argument and Motive is there in this Consideration? We are, you see, compass’d about with a great Cloud of Witnesses, all bearing Testimony to the Dignity and Value of the Bible, and to the Pleasure and Profit of conversing with it; and shall we not regard their Testimony, and receive the Instruction of it? The
Examples

*Ep. Dedicat.
before his R.
Of the Style
of Script.*

Examples of good Men, tho' not strictly a Law, are a standing Admonition to the Church, and recorded for that Purpose: *Take my Brethren the*
 Jam. v. 10. *Prophets*, says the Apostle, *for an Example. Be*
 Heb. vi. *Followers of them*, says another Apostle, *who thro'*
 12. *Faith and Patience inherit the Promises.* And again,
 1 Cor. iv. *I beseech you, be ye Followers of me.* There is in-
 16. deed a sort of an Authority in eminent Examples:
 Epist. II. "Will you mention to me, says *Cicero*, *the Scipio's*,
 " *Cato's*, and *Lælius's*, and say that they did this
 " or that? Tho' the thing displeases me, yet I
 " cannot withstand the Authority of such Men."
Seneca observes, that the Followers of *Socrates*
 learnt more from his Manners, than his Precepts:
 And behold greater than *Socrates* or *Cato* are here.
 The Christian Church has greater Names, and
 brighter Examples, than any among the Pagan
 Moralists. Oh! let us pay a due Respect to
 them; let us observe and imitate those that have
 gone before us in the way of Life: Their Practice,
 I grant, is not our Rule; but when it agrees so
 well with the Precept, it may and shou'd enforce
 it upon us.

 S E C T. VI.

Other Arguments for reading the Scripture ;
as, the Excellency, the great Usefulness of
it: 'Tis one Way of solemn Worship; and
a Means of delightful Intercourse with
God, &c.

3. **C**ONSIDER the Excellency of Scrip-
 ture, and let this invite you to a diligent
 Perusal of it. Particularly 'tis the Word of God :
 All

All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God. The ^{2 Tim. iii. 16.} Bible contains God's Oracles, which Character ^{Rom. iii. 2.} alone is sufficient to recommend it. Writings, among Men, have their Esteem and Value, very much from the Quality and Station of their Authors. A Letter from a great Person, how mean soever the Subject be, is generally priz'd. A Speech from an earthly Sovereign commands the Attention even of a Kingdom: And shall a Book that has its ⁸ Original from Heaven, which claims God for its Author, have no Regard, or but little Regard from us!

Further,

⁸ That the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the Word of God, is an Article of Religion so important in itself, and so necessary to be known and believ'd, that it ought carefully to be enquired into. Indeed some Knowledge of this is presuppos'd to the Method of conversing with the Bible, I am here advising to. Tho' the Bible be a Book of great Antiquity, and containing a Variety of excellent Learning; yet was it not a Revelation from God, in which we have a *special* Concern, nothing could entitle it to so much of our Time, Thought, and Study, as is, on that Consideration, due to it. I wou'd therefore earnestly recommend to the Reader that he endeavour, for a thorough Conviction of this Truth founded upon proper Evidence. What that Evidence is, I can't pretend in this Discourse to shew, but shall refer to such Treatises as give it with greatest Strength and Clearness. 'Tis certain, Mankind, in their present fallen State, need a Revelation from Heaven, both concerning their Duty and Happiness. We have abundant Reason to expect, that a merciful and good God wou'd herein condescend to Man's Infirmary and Necessity, and afford him a suitable Revelation. The Bible not only pretends to be a Revelation from God, but the greatest Part of it has been receiv'd as such, by as wise and great Men, as any in the World, and by large Bodies of them, for some Thousands of Years; many of whom have profess'd its Doctrines, and embraced the Religion it prescribes, at the Hazard and Expence of all that is dear to them; have laid down their Lives as a Testimony to the Truth of it. It is a Revelation

Further, the Instruments employ'd in publishing and writing the Scripture, put a Value upon it: They were *holy Men*, and *moved by the Holy Ghost*. It was not peculiar to *Isaiah*, the Holy Ghost spake by him (he spake also by the rest of the Prophets) and besides their Inspiration, they have something in their personal Character to recommend their Writings. *Moses* God knew Face to Face; *David* was a Man after God's own Heart; *Solomon* the wisest of Men; *Daniel* a Person highly beloved; *John* the Favourite Disciple of Christ: and the Apostle *Paul*, who wrote

tion every way worthy of God; has all the Internal Marks of Divinity, that can be desired: It stands confirm'd by a Train of the most amazing Miracles, the broad Seal of Heaven. The several Parts of the Bible, as the Writings of *Moses*, of the Prophets, and of the Evangelists, bear Testimony to each other, and support one another's Authority. 'Tis not so precarious an Argument of Monsieur *Du Bois de la Ceur*, as it may seem, "If, says he, there was such a Man as *Moses*, and if he was the Author of the Books commonly attributed to him, then the *Jewish* Religion is true, and the whole Old Testament of divine Original: "If the *Jewish* Religion be true, then Jesus Christ is the Messiah; and if Christ be the Messiah, all he taught and said is to be believed: Therefore the whole New Testament is true, and consequently the whole Bible a Revelation from God." The Writers of Scripture mutually receive from, and give Light and Authority one to another.

I might subjoin, as a glorious Confirmation of the Truth and Divinity of Scripture (tho' this is not a Place to enlarge upon that Subject) that it has been fulfill'd in the constant Course of Providence from the Beginning of the World to this Day. There is an admirable Harmony between the Word and Providence; so that the one seems to be nothing else but a regular acting over the other. The Scripture is the Plan or Scheme, as I may say, of the divine Government: Providence is the Counterpart thereof. For Instance, the Scripture has said, that there should be a regular Succession of Night and Day, of Winter and Summer, of Seed-time and

Harvest;

Divine Ori-
ginal of five
Books of
Moses, p. 3.

wrote so great a Part of the New Testament, was caught up into the third Heavens. These and such like were the Penmen of Scripture ; which methinks should raise our Esteem of it. What Veneration do we often pay to ancient Writings, that come to us under the Names and Authority

G

thority

Harvest ; that the Earth should be drown'd no more ; and as a Pledge of God's Veracity, his Bow should appear in the Clouds : All which we see accomplish'd. The Scripture has told us what should be the general State of the World, even to the End of Time ; has describ'd Events with great Exactness ; such as were wholly out of the Reach and Prospect of any finite Understanding. It foretells, that the Posterity of *Abraham* (the Children of *Israel*) should go down into *Egypt*, and sojourn there, in a State of Slavery and Affliction, for Four Hundred Years, and then be deliver'd ; which was accomplish'd to a Day. It describes by way of Prophecy, the Settlement of *Israel* in the Promis'd Land ; their prodigious Increase, the Condition of their several Tribes, their several Captivities, Deliverances, Revolutions and Changes ; their general Dispersion, as at this Day : Of all which the 28th of *Deuteronomy* is a sort of an Historical Map, delineating and representing, in a lively manner, every Event (as the Reward of Obedience, and Punishment of Disobedience) as if it had been wrote by some careful Observers, in successive Ages, after the things there mention'd came to pass. It describes the Rise and Fall of the four famous Monarchies of the World, the *Affyrian*, *Medo-Perfian*, *Grecian*, and *Roman* ; and that in Order, with their distinct Periods : That greatest Event of all, the Incarnation of the Son of God, is described, in the several Circumstances of it, in a manner that is truly surprizing ; as, that he should be born of a *Virgin*, and is therefore call'd in the Prediction, *the Seed of the Woman*, Gen. iii. 4. which was fulfill'd, in the very Letter, some Thousand Years after. Cou'd this be from an uninspired Pen ? It describes the Family he was to come of, the Time of his Coming, his Life, Offices, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, the Opposition he was to meet with ; the Success of his Doctrine, and Establishment of his Church ; the Rise of Antichrist, the Progress of his Kingdom, I may add, the Fall and Ruin thereof ; the State of the Church, and of Religion in its last Period ; the Resurrection

Gal. iv. 4.

thority of great Men, and Saints (as we affect to call them) tho' but weak and fallible Men at best, and have, it may be little but their Antiquity to recommend them? But here are *Saints*, undoubted Saints, great and *inspired* Saints; and shall we not treat their Writings with a suitable Regard?

I

Refurrection of the Body, the final Judgment; most of which have been exactly accomplish'd according to the Scripture Plan, and the rest we wait for, and have here ensur'd.

As to particular Persons, the Scripture anatomizes the very Heart, discovers inward Corruption in all its Workings; the general Method of God's Intercourse with Believers, enlightning, convincing, comforting, &c. It relates their several Temptations, Fears, Dangers, with the Way and Means of their Deliverance and Safety; their spiritual Maladies and Distempers, with their Cause and Cure; the Comfort and Peace that is to be found in the Way of Religion, and that followeth Obedience; the Distress, Terror, Weakness, &c. that's the Fruit of Apostacy: In short, the main Passages of the Christian's Warfare, all the Varieties of his Case and Experience, are represented in the Scripture. So that Providence is really a Transcript of the Bible. What was said of the Church, that 'tis *Christus explicatus*, Christ unfolded, may be said of Providence, that 'tis *Biblia explicata*, the Bible display'd, the several Scenes there laid down regularly acted: So that I think I need not scruple to call this a Demonstration, as strong and sensible, as a Subject of this Nature is capable of, *That he who governs the World indited the Word.*

The Reader will excuse this Digression, which I thought not impertinent to my present Purpose: The more we are establish'd in this great Truth (that the Bible is the Word of God) the better Christians we are like to be, and the better we shall esteem and improve the Bible; and I cannot but recommend it, as a Matter of the last Importance to the Reader, that he would endeavour to build here on a firm Foundation, and not take it (the Divinity of the Bible) for granted as a Tradition receiv'd from his Fathers, and a Truth generally admitted in the Country where he lives: Such a Faith, in other Places, would dispose to embrace the *Trent Creed*, or *Alcoran*, instead of the *Bible*.

I might add, under this Head, that there is an Honour put upon Scripture from the Interest the Son of God had in the Publication of it. *God* ^{Heb. i. 2.} *has in these last Days spoken to us by his Son.* What immediate Concern he had in promulging the Old Testament Laws, I shall not now enquire; but the New Testament is properly the Doctrine and Law of Christ: *It was begun to be spoke by the* ^{—ii. 30.} *Lord himself,* was confirm'd and further enlarg'd by such as he commission'd and inspir'd; so that the whole is *the Word of Christ.* And shall we not value and study a Book that comes originally from God, and is in a great measure publish'd by the Son of God incarnate? *O see that ye refuse not, neglect not, him that speaketh from Heaven!* ^{Col. iii. 16.}

Nor is it the least Argument of the Scripture's Excellency, *that it is true*; infallibly true, which gives it a Preference to all human Writings. *I* ^{Dan. x. 21.} *will shew thee,* says the Angel to Daniel, *that which is noted in the Scripture of Truth.* Its Predictions and Prophecies are true. Its Promises are ^{Luke xxiv. 44, 45, 56.} true, and (which I would more particularly here ^{2 Cor. i. 20.} take notice of) its Relations or Histories are true, and have an Exactness in them above what common Writings can pretend to. It describes not only the Actions of Men, but the Principles from whence they flow. It gives an Account of *Abel's* Faith, and *Cain's* Want of Faith in their Offerings; of *Noah's* religious Fear, when he prepared the Ark; of *Moses's* Unbelief and Passion, when he smote the Rock; of the Envy of *Joseph's* Brethren; of *Pharaoh's* Hardness of Heart; of *Sarah's* Infidelity; of *Esau's* inward profane Temper; of *David's* Pride, when he numbred the People, &c. And how valuable is the Scripture on this Account? (besides the Evidence we have from hence of its Divinity.) There never was, and

never will be, any true and *complete History*, either of *England*, or any other Nation; or indeed, of any great Event, unless an inspired Pen be employed in it. Other Histories (supposing the Writer never so honest and impartial, according to his Light) can only give us the Fact in gross, *the outward Action*, but cannot lay open the secret Springs, nor disclose the inward Passions, that gave Rise to all, and intermix'd with all. The Actions of Men ordinarily follow their Purposes and Resolutions, and these very much follow the Affections and Passions; which, how they are struck and mov'd, is often a Secret to the World, notwithstanding the greatest Events depend thereon: But these are, in many Instances, clearly displayed in the sacred History; whereby the Reader receives another sort of Instruction and Admonition than he can have from other Writings. 'Tis the Glory of Scripture, that 'tis *the Word of Truth*. On which Consideration we should value it the more, read and study it with more Care, Diligence, and Affection.

Jam. i. 18.

Further, the Scripture contains the most excellent Subjects: The Matter of it is of the greatest Importance; as, its Account of the Creation of the World, and Original of all things, in which it gives us more Satisfaction, in a short Chapter or two, than all the Heathen Philosophers have done in their numerous Writings; many of whom are so far from telling us *how* the World was made, that they believe it was *never made*, but was eternal. So its Account of Man's Apostacy, and the Origin of Evil (that puzzling Question in the Pagan Divinity,) its Account of a future State, the Certainty of another World, the chief Good and final Happiness of Man, the Immortality of the Soul, the Nature of its Happiness in the separate State ;

State; these are Doctrines of the utmost Concernment to Religion, the very Basis and Foundation thereof, and all of 'em *clearly* discover'd, and fully establish'd in the Bible, *and there only*.

The Philosophers indeed dispute now and then about such Subjects, but are sadly bewilder'd in their Thoughts, and cannot come to any Certainty in them. The famous *Socrates*, it's known, was in Suspense concerning the future Existence of the Soul; and the great *Cicero* speaks backward and forward, and in general, expresses himself rather like one that *hop'd and desir'd the Soul might* be immortal, than one *convinced* it was so. But the holy Scripture sets us above all rational Doubt on these Heads: There *Life and Immortality is* Joh. xiv. 2. *brought to Light. In my Father's House, says Christ, are many Mansions.* And again, speaking of the Luke xx. Children of the Resurrection, *Neither can they die* 36. *(saith he) any more, for they are equal to the Angels:* A Testimony of more Weight and Force, than all the fine Sayings of the Moralists put together.

And how admirable an Account does it give of the blessed God himself, of his Nature, Attributes, Perfections; of the several Parts, and the manner of his Worship? How pure a System of divine Morality does it furnish us with? directing us in every Duty and Office of Life; in every Relation and Circumstance, taking us by the Hand, as it were, and leading us Step by Step in the way to Happiness; exciting our Fears by its Terrors, our Hopes by its Promises, not only of future Glory, at the End of our Work, but by Promises of inward Assistance, whilst in our Work.

I might add, as another most important Subject, peculiar to the Scripture, the Doctrine of the Mediator. *Here, and here only*, we have an Account of the Great *Emmanuel*; of his Birth,
G 3
Life,

2 Cor. v.
19.

Life, Death, Resurrection, Ascension; of his Offices; of his Spirit; the End of his Sufferings; the Atonement made thereby; and of the special Privileges the Church enjoys by his means: Such as Justification, Adoption and Sanctification, &c. The two great Articles of all Religion, Pardon of Sin, and the Hopes of Heaven, are so entirely founded on Scripture-Revelation, that, where that is wanting, there is, there can be no sufficient Certainty of either. Here are we inform'd, that *God is in Christ, reconciling the World unto himself, not imputing their Trespases unto them.* And here we are assur'd of a Recompence at the Resurrection of the Just; Points which no Book in the World can give full Satisfaction in, that does not derive from the Bible. Indeed the Light of Nature may help us to infer, or rather conjecture, that God will reward good Men; that their Honesty, Sobriety, Beneficence, and Charity, shall not be overlook'd: But that Apostate Creatures, conscious to themselves of so much Guilt, should expect *an eternal Reward*; that all their Iniquities should be pardoned, and that God should bestow upon them a Crown of Life, *an exceeding eternal Weight of Glory*, the Knowledge of this is wholly owing to the Bible. Whatever Excellency may be suppos'd in the Virtues some value themselves upon, they are far from meriting Heaven; nor can any Principle of natural Light assure them of Heaven as the Reward thereof. For ought they know, or can know, all their little imperfect Services are repay'd, and more than repay'd, by the Bounty of common Providence, in the present Life. So that 'tis from *the Bible only* that the great Doctrines and Subjects of Religion can be learn'd. This gives the only Account of some, and the clearest

clearest Account of all of them. And shall we neglect a Book that is thus excellent, and thus instructive?

4. Consider the great Usefulness of the holy Scripture to all the Purposes of the Christian's Life, and in all the Variety of his Case and Circumstances: 'Tis *profitable for Doctrine, for Re-^{2 Tim. iii.} proof, for Correction, &c.* 'Tis a compleat Rule ^{16.} of Faith, a perfect Directory for Practice: *Ye^{Matt. xxii.} err, not knowing the Scriptures. It's a Light to^{29.} the Feet, and a Lamp to the Path.* 'Tis a Pre- ^{Pf. cxix.} servative in time of Temptation. And against ^{105.} Sin, *I have bid thy Word in my Heart, that I might^{Eph. vi. 17.} not sin against thee.* Hereby is the Christian ^{Mat. iv. 7.} warn'd and caution'd, *By the Word of thy Lips I^{Pf. cxix.} have kept my self from the Paths of the Destroyer.* ^{11.} *Treasure up the Word of God in your Minds,* ^{—xix. 11.} *hide it in your Hearts, and you'll not so easily* ^{—xvii. 4.} *yield in time of Temptation, whilst the Authority of the divine Law stares you in the Face, and, like a drawn Sword, stands before your Eyes.*

And then, how great the Support the serious Christian derives from hence in time of Adversity? *Unless thy Law had been my Delight, faith — cxix.* *David, I had perished in my Affliction.* It affords ^{29.} you Examples of suffering Saints, highly instructive; it tells you of their Faith, Patience, Resignation, and Composure in the sharpest Trials and Conflicts; it sets before you great and pre- ^{2 Pet. i. 5.} cious Promises, exactly suited, one or other of 'em, to your Case, whatever it be: It acquaints you with the Reason, Design, and Tendency of your troublesome Exercises; that it's only, *if need be, that you are in Heaviness for a Season; that though your Afflictions be not joyous, but grievous, they yield the peaceable Fruits of Righteous-*

ness; that all shall work for Good, and work for you a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory. This, and a great deal more, the Scripture will inform you of, relating to your Afflictions.

Jam. v. 11. You here read of the *Patience of Job*, and see the *End of the Lord*; and from all may collect Matter of the highest Support and Consolation in all your Troubles.

I might subjoin, that the holy Scripture, and Delight therein, is the great Means of the Christian's Fruitfulness, as the Psalmist intimates:

Pf. i. 1, 2, 3. *Blessed is the Man whose Delight is in the Law of the Lord. — He shall be like a Tree planted by the Rivers of Water, which brings forth his Fruit in Season.* What a Brook, or Canal of Water is to a Tree planted on its Banks, that is the Law of God to the Believer; he derives refreshing Streams from thence. *I will never forget thy Precepts,* (saith that devout Man) *for with them thou hast quickened me.*

Pf. cxix.
93.

Once more, let it be considered, that the holy Scripture is the Vehicle, as I may call it, of the Spirit; it not only reveals, but gives the Spirit, *i. e.* is one Means by which 'tis given: Given Gal. iii. 2. at first, *Ye received the Holy Ghost by the bearing of Faith*, (or by the Gospel); and given in greater Measures. The Spirit accompanies the Word, and affords Conviction, Light, and Influence, and further Measures thereof to the Believer, whilst he is seriously conversant therewith. Not but that a Man may find himself instructed and admonished in reading *Seneca, Antonine, Epictetus, Plutarch*, and others of the more refin'd Moralists: But as the *Bible* carries divine Morality higher (without any of the *Errata* and *Alloys*, that are mix'd with their Rules) so there is a divine Energy and Power attending the Study of

it,

it, which is peculiar to itself. And indeed this is one of the chief Glories of our Bible. I grant, that if we only consider it as an external Revelation, it exceeds all other Writings in the World: But here is its great Distinction; in this consists an eminent Part of its Usefulness and Comfort, *that 'tis the Word and Doctrine of the Spirit*; which the Spirit eminently owns by his gracious Communications; gradually enlightning, purifying, transforming the Christian; impressing the Mind, writing the Law in the Heart, and changing him into the divine *Image from Glory to Glory*. Well, ^{2 Cor. iii.} these and such like are the Purposes the Scriptures ^{18.} serve for; these are among the Advantages you may reap by a diligent and devout Conversation with them. Oh! be not such Enemies to yourselves, as to cast by this sacred Book. Let not the Dust on your Bibles witness to your Neglect and Contempt of them.

There are many high Encomiums the ancient Writers of the Church have bestowed upon the holy Scriptures. *Chrysostom* calls them the Medicine of the Soul, (*τῆς Ψυχῆς φάρμακα*) a Repository of spiritual Remedies, the Christian's Consolation in all his Troubles, his Armour, his Weapons; adding, "What Food is to the Body, that the reading of the Scripture is to the Soul: 'Tis spiritual Nourishment, and renders the Soul stronger, more constant and Philosophical; not suffering it to be carried away with absurd Imaginations, but making it pure and lightsome, gives it Wings to carry it up to Heaven."—And elsewhere: "Great is the Advantage of being skilful in the divine Writings; this makes a Philosophical Soul; this forms a Man to be acceptable; this makes him mind not things present, but to fix his Thoughts

Hom. on Col. iii. 16.

“ Thoughts on the other World and Life.” And in one of his Sermons on *Matthew*, he calls it, “ A quiet Haven, an impregnable Wall, a Tower that cannot be shaken; an Armour strong and untouch’d, Glory that cannot be lost, continual Joy and Delight.” He adds, “ Whatever can be thought of, amiable, and any way good, Commerce with the holy Scriptures will afford all that.” *Ifidore* calls it, Scales by which we may ascend to God. *Austin* calls it a Fountain of Salvation from whence we fetch Remedies against our Passions; and expressing his Preference of it to all other Writings, says, *Auferantur de medio chartæ nostræ, &c.* “ Take away our Books, let the Book of God be brought forth, hear Christ, hear the Truth speaking.” And a Multitude of Passages in the same Strain might be recited; but ’tis needless after what has been said. And indeed the Apostle comprehends all in these Words, That the holy Scriptures are able to make us wise to Salvation, to make the Man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished to every good Work. Oh Christians! attend your Duty and Interest: *Blessed are they that delight in God’s Law. Blessed is he that readeth the Words of this Prophecy.*

Prolegom. in Psal.
Enarrat. in Psal. lvii.
2 Tim. iii. 15, 17.
Psal. i. 2.
Rev. i. 3.

5. Let me offer another Argument (*viz.*) That the reading and conversing with the holy Scriptures, in the manner prescrib’d, is a Part of Worship that we owe to God, and a Means of special delightful Converse with him. Hereby we pay an Homage to the blessed God, own his Authority, his Right to give Laws, and our Subjection to him. When you take the Bible into your Hands to read (with a Temper that suits Devotion) you do, as it were, say: *Lord, thou art our King,*

King, thou art our Lawgiver; these are thy Edicts, thy Commands, which I receive and embrace as the great Standard of my Religion; the Rule of my Thoughts, Words and Actions: I am now at thy Foot to hear what God the Lord will speak. And then as you expect internal Teaching, Heart-Impressions (as you may and ought) in and by the reading of the Word, there is an inward and most profound Worship offer'd to God therein. You acknowledge him Sovereign of the Heart, Guide and Director of the Mind, perfectly acquainted with your Frame, your Thoughts, Affections, &c. all which you subject to him; waiting for the healing, rectifying, sanctifying Influences of his Spirit, by the Word. And how acceptable a Service must this be? How pleasing to God, as well as profitable to your selves?

And 'tis a Means (as I hinted) of the most grateful Intercourse with God. This many devout Christians have experienc'd: Their Hearts have sometimes burnt within them, while they have been searching the Scriptures, reflecting, meditating on them, and improving them, (in the way mentioned.) Here God and the Soul speak together: God speaks in the Word, and the Soul speaks to God, in the Exercise of suitable Graces; such as, Faith, Sorrow, Resentment, Complaint against itself, Desire, Resignation, Love, Praise, Gratitude, &c. And how delightful a Work is this! It gives an heavenly Tincture to the Mind, excites spiritual Passions, and spreads a divine Solace and Pleasure thro' the Faculties. Try the Method I am advising to and you'll find it so: No doubt, the exceeding Satisfaction and Entertainment the *Psalmist* met with in God's Statutes, were, *in part*, owing to this. They are truly excellent, I grant, and delectable, as they

they contain an History of past things, Predictions and Promises of future things, and as they are a perfect Rule of holy Living. But the Sweetness and Solace he found in them, did, I presume, result in some Measure, from the Intercourse and Communion he had with God by means thereof.

Pf. cxix. Hence they were his *Songs in the House of his Pil-*
 54. 111. *grimage, his Heritage for ever, the rejoicing of his*
 —xix. 10. *Heart. More to be desired than Gold, yea than*
much fine Gold; sweeter than the Honey, or the
Honey-comb. And could we converse with them with David's Spirit and Temper, we should experience the same Pleasure in them he did. I'll only add,

6. Which was touch'd before on another Head; and for another Purpose, that the Spirit of God lays so great Stress upon this, *that he distinguishes Men by their Regard to, or Neglect of the Scriptures.* Hence he fetches his Characteristicks of good and bad Men. How plainly is this imply'd

Ver. 1, 2. in the first Psalm? *Blessed is the Man who walk-*
eth not in the Counsel of the Ungodly, &c. but his
Delight is in the Law of the Lord, &c. where he describes the Pious, the Godly, the Blessed, by

Ver. 4. their Delight in God's Law; and adds, *The Un-*
godly are not so: (i. e.) They are not blessed as the Godly are; nor do they delight in the divine Law as the Godly do. So that there are two sorts of Persons distinguished by most essential Characters: The one make the Law of God their Rule, their Study, their Counsel and Delight; the other walk in Counsels of their own, in the ways of their Heart, and in the Sight of their Eyes; and as
 Pf. x. 5. for God's *Judgments, they are far above, out of*
their Sight. They live without God and his Law in the World. And can there be a greater Argument to love and delight in the holy Scriptures?

'Tis

'Tis, you see, the Property and Character of a Saint, and the Neglect of it the Mark of a Reprobate; those worthless Creatures, that Chaff which the Wind driveth away, and which shall be burnt up with unquenchable Fire!

And thus I have set before you several Arguments to enforce the Exhortation I have given to a serious devout Converse with the Word of God in your Oratories. Don't despise what has been said; don't omit so great, so necessary and important a Duty any longer. If hitherto you have neglected it, now address your selves to it; resolve henceforward to esteem and use your Bible more, and allow it a Place in your constant daily secret Worship. Say not this is the Business of Divines and Secluses (Persons sequester'd from the World.) 'Tis the Business of all Christians, of every one that has a due Regard to the Safety and Prosperity of his immortal Soul. *Let the Col. ii. Word of God dwell richly in you, saith the Apostle, 16.* which Exhortation he directs to Christians in common. "Hearken to this (saith an eminent Father, in a Discourse upon the Text) ὅσοι ἐστὶν *Corystom.*
 " κοσμικοὶ, πάντες οἱ βιωτικοὶ, as many as are
 " Men of the World, secular Men, and have
 " Wives and Children under your Care; observe
 " how he commands, *even you especially*, to read
 " the Scriptures, and that not by the bye, but
 " with a great deal of Diligence." And elsewhere he gives a Reason why the reading of the Scriptures is *more necessary for them*, than even for retired Ecclesiasticks. "They that live in
 " the World, says he, being most exposed to
 " the Danger of being wounded (*i. e.* injur'd in
 " their Minds and Frame) have most need of
 " Medicines." Don't, Christians, distinguish away, and shift off from your selves a Duty which
 so

so nearly concerns you, and which you should look upon as your Privilege, as really it is. God hath shewn you his Word, his Statutes, and his Judgments: He hath not dealt so with every Nation. Praise ye the Lord: Be thankful for this greatest of Favours, and make suitable Improvement of the Goodness of God herein.

What would such a Man, as the Accounts we have of *Socrates* represent him to have been, have given for a Book of so much Wisdom, and divine Philosophy, as the *Bible*? And shall Christians, that have it in their Hands, and that with all manner of Advantage for the understanding it, set light by it? Lay it aside, as a useless thing! And in the mean time (which is too common a Case) prefer the sorriest Trash, a Romance, a Play-Book, or other impure Novel to it! How many seem to be of the Wretch's Mind, that profanely declared, *He found more Sweetness in one of Pindar's Odes, than in all Paul's Epistles*. Common Civility indeed may restrain them from expressing, in Words, such Indecencies and Rudeness in a Christian Country; but their Conduct gives broad Hints they have not a much better Taste of things. You may visit the Closets of some pretending to Wit and Learning (I have Reason for what I say) and find neither *Bible*, or any Book upon the Scripture there. *Homer, Juvenal, Ovid*, and other licentious Poets, are all the Saints they converse with; and these, you'll see in the exactest Order, shining in all the Ornaments Art can enrich them with; whilst the Oracles of Heaven are quite jostled out, out of the Heart, the House, and trampled under Foot! *But, blessed Lord! there are chaster Breasts, more divine Souls: All don't thus despise the inestimable Treasure of thy Word. Let not thy Kingdom, thy Law, thy Gos-*
spel

spel be taken from us; that it may be given to a Nation bringing forth the Fruits thereof. But I must check my self. Reader, I have somewhat largely set before thee a Duty of exceeding Moment; and do here call upon thee, as thou regardest thy Allegiance to the great Sovereign and Law-giver of the Church, as thou tenderest the Favour, the Peace and Comfort of a pure Heart, and upright Conscience, not to neglect it. Oh! cast not God's Laws behind thy Back: Read, study, love, and live thy Bible!

S E C T. VII.

Of Meditation. The Duty describ'd. Subjects proper for Meditation. Of more set and solemn Meditation.

2. **I** Now proceed to another Part of the Work and Duty of Retirement, (*viz.*) *Meditation*, which the reading the Scripture may both dispose you to, and assist you in. As to its Nature (to give you a sort of a Description of it) 'Tis a *fixed solemn Survey, or Consideration of some or other Subject of Religion, in order to raise the Affections, form pious Resolutions, improve the Mind, and converse with God*: Where you see, I suppose, a particular Subject chosen, and this a *divine Subject*; something that concerns Religion, or may at least be improved to a religious Purpose: By which I distinguish this kind of Meditation from thinking or reflecting on common things, in a common way; as, upon secular Business, Arts, Sciences, News, &c. I add, 'tis a *fixed solemn Consideration*
of

of a Subject; in which it differs from more *slight and transient thinking*, even upon divine Matters: 'Tis a design'd close Examination of this or that Argument, or Text, searching into its Meaning; laying open the Treasures of Truth contain'd in it; making Application of all to our selves, by way of Admonition, Reproof, Exhortation; mixing spiritual Affections therewith, as Sorrow, Repentance, Self-Indignation, Love, Joy, &c. endeavouring by all to carry on some Intercourse with Heaven. This is the Exercise I am recommending to you; concerning which let me propose a few things.

1. That this kind of Meditation is not a Matter of pure Indifferency, or a Free-will-offering; which may be expected from the Zeal of more eminent Christians, but may be omitted without Guilt or Loss: But it must be consider'd, with respect to many, *as a Duty*, and what we are under great Obligations to. Something of it seems implied in that Precept to the Children of *Israel*,

Deut. xi.
8.

Therefore shall ye lay up these my Words in your Heart, and in your Soul, and bind them for a Sign upon your Hand, that they may be as Frontlets between your Eyes: (i. e.) They were to read them, digest them, consider them, ruminate and descant upon them, revolving them in their Minds, and conversing with them on all Occasions. All this the Prophet may import, and consequently includes *Meditation*. And yet more express to

Josh. i. 8.

our Purpose is the Command to *Joshua*: *This Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy Mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein Day and Night, that thou mayest observe and do according to all that's written therein; for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good Success: Which certainly must intend more than a bare Reading,*

Reading, how frequent soever: *Thou shalt meditate therein Day and Night that thou mayest observe and do.* We are to fix the Mind upon God's Law, in order to form the Heart, and regulate the Life thereby. So the *Psalmist*, *Stand in awe, and* Ps. iv. 4. *sin not commune with your Heart, upon your Bed, and be still, Selah: Upon your Bed, or in your Bed-chamber, as the Hebrew Word (Misheab) may be rendered, (i. e.) in your Oratory or Closet; which may not improperly be referred to the Employment we are now speaking of. And thus we may take that of the Apostle: Let the Word* Col. iii. 16. *of Christ dwell in you richly in all Wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another, &c. or your own selves* (ἐαυτοὺς, vosmet-ipsos, as the vulgar Latin renders it) which, as 'tis agreeable to the Original, so it cannot be thought impertinent in this Place; and consequently may be understood as an express Command for Meditation. We are to lay up the Word of Christ, furnish our Minds with it, and then apply it to our own Hearts, by way of Instruction, Admonition, &c.

And the same is recommended to us, by the Examples of good Men recorded in Scripture. *Isaac went out to meditate in the Even-tide.* A Practice that, probably, he had been train'd up in, 63. by the religious Care of his Father *Abraham*, as — xviii. Part of that *Way of the Lord* he would command 19. his Household to keep. And how frequently do we find the devout *David* thus employed? Some- Ps. cxix. times he meditated on the Word of God. Some- 15, 23, 48, times on the Works of God. On the Works of 78. Nature. On the Works of Providence. Some- lxxvii. 12. times on God himself. Nor did he only now — civ. and then glance at such Subjects, think on — cxliii. 5. them occasionally; but address'd himself to the — civ. 24. Work with Zeal and Solemnity. *Mine Eyes* — cxix.

prevent the Night-Watches, saith he, that I meditate on thy Word. I remember thee upon my Bed, and meditate on thee in the Night-Watches. And again, Oh! how I love thy Law, it is my Meditation all the Day.

Pf. lxiii.
6.

Pf. cxix.
97.

I might urge the greatest Example of all to confirm this Duty, (*viz.*) that of the Lord Jesus. I before observ'd, he retired not only for Prayer, but Meditation; of which the Scripture gives several Hints, tho' we have not the particular Instances of his Meditations: For there were many more things that Jesus did (by way of Devotion, no question, as well as Miracle) which are not written in the Gospel-History. "Christ," says Mr. Baxter, was us'd to a solitary Garden, that even Judas, when he came to betray him, knew where to find him. And tho' he took his Disciples thither with him, yet did he separate himself from them for more secret Devotion. And tho' his Meditation be not directly nam'd, only his Prayer; yet it is very clearly implied. His Soul is first made sorrowful, with the bitter Meditation on his Death and Suffering; and then he poureth it out in Prayer." So that we have both Precept, and Example for this Exercise; it is what God has commanded, and what good Men have practis'd, which is sufficient to place it in the Number of Duties, and shew our Obligations to it.

Joh. xxi.
25.

Saint's Rest,
p. 715.

Joh. xviii.
12.

Luke xxii.
41.

Mat. xxvi.
38, 39.

Mark xiv.
24.

2. The Subjects proper for Meditation are exceeding many; enough to entertain and employ the Christian through his whole Life. Any text of the Bible that you know how suitably to improve, any Doctrine, or Article of Religion may be chosen for the Subject of your Meditation: Such as, the Existence of God, the divine Attributes,

butes, (any, or all of them) the Works of Nature and Providence ; the Certainty of Religion ; the Vanity of the World ; the Depravity of human Nature, the Grace of God in Redemption ; the Person and Offices of Christ ; his Incarnation, Example, Life, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, Intercession ; the Offices of the Holy Spirit, enlightning, quickning, convincing, converting ; the several Graces of the Christian, as Faith, Repentance, Love to God, Meekness, Humility, Justice, Temperance, Charity ; the Duties of our respective Relations, as Parents, Children, Husbonds, Wives, &c. the Sins and Mifcarriages of our Thoughts, Words and Actions ; the Duties of the Closet, of the Family, of the Assembly, &c. the four last things, Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell : These, sometimes one, sometimes another of 'em, with a great Variety more, may be the Subjects of your Meditation.

And that you may not be at a Loss, but always have your Text ready, I would advise that you note down a Number of Subjects, as they occur to you, either in a distinct Book, kept for that Purpose, or in some Leaves of your *Diary*. If you meet with any thing in reading, which may furnish you with a suitable Subject, and supply you with useful Hints in the Management of it ; *have a Reference to it in your Paper*, that you may bring it into your Oratory, on Occasion : And the like Assistance you may have from the Sermons you hear. Suppose you hear two or three a Week, one or other, it may be, each of these will give you a Text for your Closet : As if the Text in publick be, *Matth. xxvi. 19, 20. Lay not up for yourselves Treasures on Earth, &c.* Or, ver. 26. *What is a Man pro-*

fited, if he should gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? Or, Rom. viii. 1. There is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit. When you return to your Closet, you may write down one or other, or all of these Texts, and make use of them in your Meditations, on proper Occasions; in which the Sermon will ordinarily assist you, both with respect to Matter and Method. And let me add, that did you hear Sermons with this Design and View, you wou'd hear with more Attention, Care, and Diligence; and with more Advantage to your selves than is common.

3. The Meditation I intend (upon any of these divine Subjects) *is a set solemn thing*, in which it differs (as was in part hinted before) from occasional Reflections; such as one may have walking in the Street, or Field; when in the Shop, in Company, or Business. A spiritual Mind will be often fallying out, and transiently saluting this or that divine Subject, even though it cannot stay upon it. But besides this, there is a *more solemn* Meditation, when a Person addressees himself to the Work with Design, and carries it on for some time; and this is the Meditation I am now considering.

4. It may be allowable in your Meditations *to reflect upon a Variety of Subjects successively, at one and the same time*; as on the four last Things, Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell; or upon several Particulars of the Chapter you have last read; upon some Occurrences of the Day, and the like. And tho' this sort of Meditation is less perfect, and ordinarily less profitable; yet to some it is more practicable, and what they can more easily attain to, than that which is confin'd to one Subject. Persons of weak Heads, and
little

little Invention, know not how to keep their Thoughts fixed for any time to one thing; nor can they find Matter in a single Subject, to supply a Meditation: In which Case this more unconfin'd Meditation may be indulg'd, nor is it without its Use. No doubt you may profitably go from one Subject to another, and take in several at once, bestowing such Reflections upon each, as readily and with Ease offer themselves. But,

5. Ordinarily it will be best to fix upon a *particular* Subject, and keep to that, explaining and applying it as you are able; and, as was said above, *let it be chosen before-hand*, that you may not spend that time in seeking your Text, which should be employed in improving it. Having the Subject before you, proceed in your Work. Suppose, for Instance, Heaven be your Subject, you are first to consider what Heaven is, enquire into the several Ingredients of its Happiness, (*viz.*) as a State of Deliverance and Freedom from Sor-^{Rev. xxi.} row and Suffering, from Sin and Imperfection,^{24.} as a State of Rest. Next represent to your selves^{Heb. xii.} such Arguments and Considerations as prove^{23.} that there is such a State, Arguments taken from^{Rev. xiv.} Reason, and from Scripture; and then bring all^{13, &c.} Home by a particular and close Application; which indeed you will be naturally led to by the Course and Tenor of your Meditation. And thus you are to proceed upon other Subjects: But I shall afterwards lay before you more complete Examples and Specimens for your Assistance.

6. Besides those that are chosen and known, *occasional* Subjects will sometimes offer, and shou'd take place of others, as Circumstances may recommend them; the Scripture you read will fre-
H 3 quently

quently suggest a Text for your Meditation. So, at Night, the Occurrences of the Day past; what you meet with in Conversation; any remarkable Providence of God toward your selves, your Family, your Neighbours; these will afford proper Matter for serious Reflection; and it will be best to attend to such Subjects, as being most seasonable and instructive *at that Time*. As when the Providence of God presents you with a notable Example of the Vanity of the World, not only when *Riches make themselves Wings, and suddenly fly away*, but when the true Enjoyment is lost (which is a very common Case.) Or, when you observe Men of an aspiring ambitious Spirit, that love to make a Bustle in the World, *that lay House to House, and join Field to Field*, as if they would be placed alone in the midst of the Earth; how they disquiet themselves in vain; what Snares and Temptations surround them; how much plung'd in the Dirt, and loaded with thick Clay, *so that they cannot look up*; have no Sense of God and Religion, no Savour and Relish of heavenly Things, but are utterly lost to all that is virtuous, wise and good: This may lead your Thoughts to a most useful Meditation.

So when you have a remarkable Instance of human Frailty, in the sudden surprizing Death of any of your Neighbours, and Acquaintance. Last Week, say you, I was worshipping in the same Place with such a one, or was conversing with him in such a Company; and now, *in three or four Days Sickness*, he is snatch'd away, and gone into Eternity. Such a Providence as this should not be overlook'd, we shou'd carry it with us into our Oratories, make it our Text, and bestow a few devout Reflections upon it. And if the Person was young, just entering upon
the

the World, forming to himself pleasing Prospects, or pursuing his Gratifications with full Career; that Circumstance will not want its Instruction. 'Tis said of a Merchant, that talking with his Friend, who fell down dead before him; he immediately upon it retired and considered it to so good Purpose, that it became the Means of his Conversion.

If you are cast into the Company of *vile Persons*, as the Psalmist calls some; such Fools as *Pf. xv. 4.* make a Mock of Sin, that sit in the Chair of the Scornful, that toils about Damnation in their profane Mouths; or if they have not arriv'd to this Pitch of Wickedness, yet swell with Pride and Vanity, are earthly and sensual: Even hence you may find Matter for a profitable Meditation, representing to your selves the Wisdom of Solomon's Advice, *If Sinners entice thee, consent thou not.* *Pr. i. 10.* And of the Psalmist's Practice, and Resolution; *I have not sat with vain Persons, neither will I go* *Pfal. xxvi.* *in with Dissemblers. I have hated the Congregation* *4. 5.* *of evil Doers, and will not sit with the wicked;* exciting your Gratitude for that Grace which has made you to differ; rejoicing in your more happy Circumstances, and infinitely more desirable State, even tho' in a Shade of outward Meanness and Contempt, and begging God wou'd not gather your Soul with Sinners. Indeed a great deal of that Spiritual-mindedness, that divine heavenly Frame and Temper we should endeavour after lies here, (*viz.*) *in observing and improving daily Occurrences, and conversing with God in the Variety of his Providences.* And if we could bring them (many of them) into our Closets, and seriously preach from them to our own Souls; it would be of no small Use to us.

7. This Meditation may sometimes be more solemn, carried on to a greater Length, and managed

naged with greater Skill and Labour. Besides what's done in the ordinary stated Course of your Closet-Religion, it will be advisable now and then to set about this Duty with more Seriousness and Solemnity, as when *the North Wind awakes, and the South Wind blows upon your Garden*; when in the most devout Frame, and your Souls make you like the Chariots of *Amminadab*; on the *Lord's Day Evening*, we will suppose, on a Sacrament-Day, after some awakening Providence or Sermon. In a Word, whenever a Concurrence of Circumstances render you most sufficient, and best qualified for the Duty, and consequently invite you to it. In the Affairs of the World Men have their *happy Seasons*, and Opportunities of extraordinary Advantage; when they apply themselves to their Business with more than common Diligence and Pains, they can abridge themselves, as you may observe, not only of their Diversion and Pleasure, but of their Sleep and common Food. The Shop-keeper will stand on his Feet on a Market-day from Morning 'till Night, to receive a few Shillings and Pounds, and think a good Market a sufficient Recompence for his Self-denial. And shall not the Christian have his *favourable Seasons, his Market days*, as I may call 'em, for his Soul? when he exerts his Faculties, and makes his most vigorous Efforts towards Heaven; when he sets himself apart for a more close and strict Intercourse with God, seeking God with his *whole Heart*: And on these Occasions, on these Days of more solemn Religion, such Meditation as I am here recommending, will be pertinent and suitable.

I'll only add, 8. That tho' the common Christian shou'd not be solicitous, and over careful about Order and Method, which it cannot be
suppos'd

suppos'd he's Master of; yet 'tis proper he shou'd *observe some Method*, and range his Thoughts in the best Manner he can; which is necessary both to prevent Confusion, and also to assist the Affections. There is something in the very Constitution of our Minds and Faculties, that makes *Method* naturally agreeable to us, even tho' we understand scarce any thing of the Rules and Laws of it, nor are able to discern when a Discourse is irregular and immethodical, any otherwise than *by feeling it*; and therefore I can't but recommend it even to the unlearned, that in such Exercises as these, they wou'd endeavour to dispose their Thoughts in the best Order they are able: They need not be scrupulous about it, and yet should not be altogether careless.

As to Expression and Style, less Regard is to be had to that. Quaint Phrases, measured Periods, &c. need be none of your Concern; for as they are of little Use, even in studied Composures of this kind, so they can't be expected from ordinary Christians, in such Exercises: Tho' the more *rational and argumentative* the Meditation is, the greater the Advantage is like to be; and of this Nature I shall endeavour to make the Examples I have to offer, and which I shall now subjoin.

S E C T. VIII.

Several Specimens and Examples of such Meditation, as has been describ'd. Examples of the more solemn Meditation.

THIS Duty of divine Meditation being of exceeding Importance in the Christian Life, and yet I am afraid little understood and practis'd
by

by the Generality of Christians, even such as dare not neglect other Duties of the like Nature, as Reading and Prayer; I have thought it necessary more distinctly to consider. Something has been said, both to prove it a Duty, and to explain the Nature of it; and that none may be discouraged from setting about it, on the account of their apprehended Inability, and want of Skill for the Management of it: I shall, for their Assistance, propose some Examples of such Meditations, as they are to employ themselves in. And let the first Subject be *Death*, which may be considered either from a particular Text of Scripture, or without it. If you chuse the former, that may be proper enough, 'Tis appointed for all Men once to die; and having put up a few Petitions, you are to contrive and fix the Method, and so proceed.

Heb. ix.
27.

A Meditation on Death.

The first
Specimen.

Here, say you, I shall, 1. Consider what Death is in it self, and Consequences. 2. That 'tis certain. 3. Take notice of some Circumstances of it. 4. Apply all to my self.

1. As to the first of these, *What Death is*, my Senses in a great measure inform me, *that it is the Separation of Soul and Body*, which the Scriptures also confirm; 'tis a breaking the Union between these two, so that they go different ways. *Then shall the Dust return to the Earth as it was, and the Spirit to God that gave it.* 'Tis a
Ecclef. xii. 7.
Phil. i. 3. Dissolution: *I desire to depart*, or be dissolv'd.

Its Consequences, with respect to the Body, are, the Privation or Loss of Life, Sense, Motion; it takes down *this Tabernacle*; leaves it a cold

cold lifeless Lump, a loathsome Carcase. Let me bury my dead out of my Sight, says Abraham Gen. xxiii. of his once beloved Sarah; So that now it lies rotting in the Dust. Sees Corruption, and is prey'd upon by Worms: After my Skin the Worms destroy this Body. This Death does, this it will shortly do, with respect to my self. This Body I am now so tender of, so careful about, that I pamper so much, will be the Food of Worms, will be sown in Corruption. 'Tis indeed an admirable Structure, and discovers the exquisite Wisdom of its Author: I am fearfully and wonderfully made; but Death will mar all its Beauty.

As to the Soul, the Consequences of it are its immediate Dislodgment, its Departure from the Body. At Death I shall put off this Body, shall use its Members, Organs and Instruments no more; shall see with these Eyes, hear with these Ears, speak by this Tongue no more; nor shall I enjoy its Pleasures, or taste its Gratifications any more for ever. In this respect, *Post mortem nulla voluptas*, there's no Delight in the Grave: *Nunquam joca dabis*, thou shalt jest, sport, &c. no more; as the dying Emperor said to his departing Soul. Nor must I only quit the Body at Death, but the whole World, and all its Enjoyments: I shall behold Man no more with the Inhabitants of the World. My Trade, Estate, Friends, Relations must be left; all my Projects, Thoughts, Contrivances, Studies, &c. will be over for ever: For there is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledge, nor Wisdom in the Grave. All Employments, Civil or Religious, all Endeavours (that are in the Nature of Means, and concern Preparation) Death puts an End to. The Grave cannot praise thee, they that go down into the Pit cannot hope for thy Truth. The living, the living shall praise thee,
as

as I do this Day. And then at Death, as the Soul leaves this World and State, so it enters upon another, *a new State*, and very much *an unknown State*. Death carries us from a World of Bodies to a World of Spirits; changes the manner of our Acting; the Objects of our Enjoyments, and and the Enjoyments themselves. I must then part with this Body, but how shall I act out of it? How shall I see without an Eye? understand and reason without a Brain? love without an Heart? Lord, thou know'st! And as 'tis another, *a new State*, so 'tis *an eternal State*. After Death my Condition is fix'd; I must either be happy or miserable, and that *fully and for ever*.

Luke xvi. 22, 25. When *Lazarus* died, he *was carried by Angels into Abraham's Bosom*, and *was comforted*. The rich

Ver. 23, 24. *Man died*, and the next we hear of him was, that *in Hell he lift up his Eyes, being tormented in Flames*.

Nor were the Comforts of the one, and Torments of the other, liable to any Change. No, *the Gulph is fixed*, their Portion eternal. And, O my Soul, how awful a thing is Dying! how surprizing the Change Death makes; and how much does it challenge thy Thoughts and Care!

2. The Certainty of Death. But must I die, change States, and pass into an unseen, unknown World? Yes, this is certain, it

Gen. iii. 19. *is appointed for all Men once to die. Dust thou art, and unto Dust thou shalt return*. Death indeed was

not due to, and design'd for primitive uncorrupted Nature; and therefore is not properly *a Debt to Nature*, as it is often called. Had not Man sinned, he would have been, *by the Favour of God*, immortal. I don't mean that he would have lived always on this Earth, but after such a Time of Probation, Trial and Preparation, as divine Wisdom had appointed, Colonies of the more excellent refined Souls wou'd, I suppose, have been
been

been translated (without dying, and with their Bodies) into the Regions above. But sin has brought the Curse of Mortality upon the World. *In Adam all die, all without Exception; the greatest Monarch, as well as the poorest Peasant: Ye are Gods, but ye shall die like Men.* Death is the Way of all the Earth. The Grave is the House appointed for all the Living; 'tis impossible to avoid the Stroke of it; none can retain the Spirit in Death, there is no Discharge in that War.

Rom.v.12.

1 Cor. xv.

21.

Pf. lxxxii.

Josh. xxiii.

14.

Eccl. viii.

8.

But thou needest not, O my Soul! a Multitude of Arguments to prove what thy own Observation, and even Senses may convince thee of. Dost thou not observe that one Generation comes, and another goes? and that thus it has been from the Beginning? Our Fathers, where are they? and the Prophets, do they live for ever? Thy own Father, who fourscore Years ago was not, has been dead twenty or thirty Years. How many of thy Acquaintance, in the Neighbourhood, are dead and gone within the Compass of thirty Years? Search the Register of the Parish where thou livest, and 'tis not likely thou wilt find *one of those now alive*, that were baptized an hundred Years ago. Nay, look through a Kingdom, through the Earth, and ask what are become of the Inhabitants thereof, that were acting their Part on the Stage of this World an hundred Years since; are they not all swept away, and pass'd into Eternity? Yea most of them forgotten, and the Places that knew them know them no more!

Thou seest, oh my Soul! that wise Men die, like-wise the Fool and the brutish Person perish.

Pf. xlix.

10.

Nor is it only certain that I must die, but I must soon die: Death is not cannot be a great way off, tho' I attain to the Years of my Fathers, in the House of their Pilgrimage. Job observes, when

3. Some Circumstances of Death.

when the Term of human Life was not so much reduced as now that *Man who is born of a Woman is but of few Days*. And the Psalmist afterwards complains, that his *Days were but an Handbreadth*: Our Life is a Vapour, which *appeareth for a little time, and vanisheth away*. Nay, so inconsiderable, minute, and even nothing is our Existence here, that we are compared to a Sleep or Dream, and our whole Life confin'd within the narrow Limits of a Day. *In the Morning*, says he, *they are like Grass which groweth up, in the Morning it flourisheth and groweth up, in the Evening it is cut down and withereth*. O my Soul! consider this, look a little before thee (and thou needst not look far, thy Day, thy short Day is spending, it will soon be Night) look forward, I say, and thou wilt find thy self in the Arms of Death; a cold Sweat sitting on thy languishing Body; thy Breath and Pulse ceasing, and the Soul taking its Flight. That Vapour of thy Life will soon vanish away. O believe what thou canst not deny, and frequently represent this Scene and State of things to thy self; place thy self among the Dead, free among the Dead, like the Slain that lie in the Grave.

And as Death is near, so 'tis hastening apace: *We are going to the Grave*. And how constant, how quick the Motion? *My Days*, says Job, *are swifter than a Weaver's Shuttle, than a Post, they flee away*. Nor do I know how near, how surprising the Summons of Death may be; the Fool in the Parable was struck in the midst of his Security, in the very Moment of his sensual Triumph. *Soul*, says he, *thou hast much Goods laid up for many Years, take thine Ease, eat, drink, and be merry*; and behold, like *Belshazzar*, when carousing in the consecrated Vessels of the Temple

ple, the Fingers of a Man's Hand writing appear: *This Night*, says God, *thy Soul shall be required of thee.* Oh how startling a Message, how amazing the Disappointment! May this never be my Case, but may I watch, and pray always, that *that* Day come not upon me unawares. My Soul, *boast not thyself of to-morrow*; for *thou knowest not what a Night may bring forth.* Talk not of going into such a City, and continuing a Year, and getting Gain; for what is thy Life, 'tis even a Vapour!

I might observe, 'tis but *once* that I must die: 'Tis appointed for all Men *once to die.* If a Man ^{Heb. ix.} die, *shall he live again?* No, *he lieth down, and* ^{27.} *riseth not till the Heavens be no more.* Thou hast, ^{Job xv. 12.} O my Soul! but one Cast for Eternity; if thou forgettest the Work and Errand of Life, and miscarriest at Death, thou art lost for ever. There is no *Tabula post naufragium*, no Plank to swim to Shore on, if thou art shipwreck'd here. *Now is the accepted Time, now is the Day of Salvation*; but there is no Work in the Grave, no Repentance after Death, or Return to Life. *Now, or never.*

A Second Meditation on Death.

AND now O my Soul, review this momentous Subject, and receive Instruction from thence. Must I die, soon die (*i. e.*) must this Body be reduced to Dust? This should teach me how to esteem and value it, *viz.* as a fading, falling, perishing thing. *The earthly House of this Tabernacle*, saith the Apostle, *shall be dissolved,* ^{1 Cor. v. 1.} *i. e.* taken down, pull'd to Pieces; alluding, some have thought, to the taking down the Tabernacle under

The Application.

under the Law. First, the most holy things were uncover'd and removed; so the Soul, that most divine Part of Man, the unseen Inhabitant, *that Ark* in the Tabernacle, is first withdrawn. Then the Veils and Curtains were folded up, and thus the Skin and Flesh is destroyed and eaten by Worms. And in the last Place, the Boards of the Tabernacle were disjointed and separated; so the Sinews and Bones of the human Body are loos'd and perish. All which *Solomon* expresses in a Variety of elegant Phrases, *Ecclef. xii.* from the Beginning. This I shall shortly experience in my own Case: Death will dissolve the Tabernacle, the curious Machine of the Body, extinguish the Lamp of Life, break the hidden Springs of Motion: The Hands shall act, the Foot move no more, the Lungs breathe, the Stomach digest, the Tongue speak no more: It will utterly spoil the Features and Colours, destroy that Symmetry and Beauty, which is the great Idol of vain Minds. In short, Death draweth the Pins, and then the whole Frame falls to Pieces. And why so much ado about an House of Clay, a tottering Tabernacle, a poor Carcase, adorning, pampering, pleasing it? O my Soul! consider *'tis a vile Body*: So the Scripture calleth it, and so Death will make it; and let this moderate thy Affections to it.

Phil. iii.
21.

Further, Must I die, and leave this Body rotting in the Grave, thus dissolved? How little Account shou'd I make of those Enjoyments which are *confn'd to the Body*, and entirely depend upon it? 'Tis observable, when *Solomon* had laid Mankind in the Dust, he immediately repeateth the main Argument of his Book, *Vanity of Vanities, saith the Preacher, all is Vanity.* And indeed whatever Excellency there may be in these

Ecclef. xii.
7, 8.

these things, in themselves, or we may imagine there is in them, they must needs be Vanity to dying Creatures. Riches, Honours, Beauty, the whole Circle of fleshly Gratifications, are but Conveniencies for a perishing Body, and must perish when the Body perisheth. Oh my Soul! look out of the Grave, out of the Dust, upon the Pleasures and Entertainments of the poor deluded Sensualist, and then pronounce concerning them: Say what they are, and never chuse that for thy Happiness, that terminates in the Body, and falleth with it.

Again, must I die, *i. e.* depart from this 2 Pet. i. 15. World, leave it and all its Enjoyments, certainly and soon leave it? 'Tis evident, it was never design'd to be my Portion, nor can I, without the extremest Folly, take up with it, and rest in it as such. Had it every thing else to recommend it, 'tis enough to cool my Affections to it, to sully its Glory, and strip it of all its Charms, *that 'tis so momentary.* It can be no Happiness to me, was it a thousand times more excellent and valuable than 'tis, who must die, nay, am *just ready to die, and leave it.* And oh my Soul! why shou'd I be fond of what I cannot enjoy, and pursue a Shadow that is flying from me? 'Tis very instructive, that my great Lord and Master calls present things *another Man's*, and distinguishes Luke xvi. them from what is *our own*, which the Psalmist's 12.

Words may serve for a Comment upon: *Be not* Pf. xlix. *afraid* (or disturb'd, uneasy) *when one is made* 16, 17. *rich, and the Glory of his House is increased; for when he dieth, he shall carry nothing away; his Glory shall not descend after him. No, he leaveit* Ver. 10. *his Wealth to others.* And this is really the State of things with us; this is the Tenure of our Enjoyments. Remember, O my Soul! thou art
I passing

Luke xvi.
20.

passing thro' this World, and shalt soon pass out of it; whatever I have 'tis not properly an Inheritance; I am only a Tenant *for Life*, and indeed *at Will*: When it shall please God to requite my Soul of me, *whose* shall these things be I have provided? 'Tis certain, whosoever they are, they are not *mine*, but pass to others, *i. e. pass thro' their Hands*. Oh! may I chiefly value and mind *my own things*, the true Riches, and love this World as one that is leaving it.

1 Cor. xv.
32.

Further, must I die, leave the Body, and subsist without it, in a separate State? Must I enter upon another, a different and new Life? It highly concerneth me *now to acquaint* my self with the other After-state; to abstract from the Body, and live above it as far as I can; to begin that Life which is more suited to my own Nature, as a Spirit, *viz. the rational and divine Life*. Was this my only Duration, there would be some Reason for the Epicure's Conduct, *Let us eat and drink, for to Morrow we die*. Why shou'd they not make the best they can of this Life, who expect no other? But this is not my Case: Death is a Dissolution, not a Destruction. I then *depart*, but am not extinct: I must live and exist even to everlasting, when I have quitted the Body; and this shou'd direct me how to live before-hand:

Sherlock on
Death, p. 53.

Particularly it shou'd teach me, "To live with
" out the Body now as much as possibly I can;
" to have but very little Commerce with Flesh
" and Sense; to wean my self from bodily Plea-
" sures, that when I use them, it may be with-
" out Fondness, and may let them alone without
" being uneasy for the want of them. A wise
" Man should thus reason with himself: If I
" grow so fond of this Body, and the Pleasures
" of it; if I can relish no other Pleasures, if I
" value

“ value nothing else, what shall I do when I
 “ leave this Body? for bodily Pleasure can last
 “ no longer than this Body doth: And what
 “ shall I do in the next World, when I shall be
 “ stripp’d of the Body? For whatever Cover-
 “ ing I may have, I shall have no Flesh and
 “ Blood about me; and therefore all the Plea-
 “ sures I value now, will then vanish like a
 “ Dream. Whatever Alteration Death will
 “ make in the Temper and Disposition of the
 “ Mind (as to the Desire of bodily Pleasures)
 “ ’tis certain a Man wholly sunk into Flesh and
 “ Sense, is not capable of living happily out of
 “ his Body, unless a new Scene of material and
 “ and sensible Pleasures could be found out to
 “ entertain him. His very Soul is sensualized,
 “ and therefore is incapable of the Pleasures of
 “ a spiritual Life.” May I consider this in time,
 and now be attempting, and essaying something
 of the Life of the other World, of the separate
 unbodied State! This Death, as it is a leaving
 the Body, admonishes me of. How wretched
 shall I be, if I can relish no Pleasures but what
 are derived through the Senses of the Body,
 when I shall shortly have done with the Body for
 ever!

Again, must I die, and but *once* die? Endeavour, oh my Soul! to make sure Work for dying, and for Eternity, that I may die well, and not miscarry in that *last and great Change*. An Error here is fatal, and cannot be corrected; consequently the utmost Caution is due in order to avoid it. It was a good answer to one, that ask’d why the *Lacedæmonians* were so slow in passing capital Judgment; why so many Examinations taken; so many Defences permitted to the Accused; and, after Conviction and Sentence, such

Plut. Apothegm.

a Space of Time before Execution ; because, saith he, *A Mistake in the Case is incorrigible* ; they may destroy the living, but cannot revive the dead. And thus it is in the Affair before me : When the Sentence of Death is past and executed, it cannot be revers'd ; my State is determin'd for ever. 'Tis appointed for all *once* to die, once and *but once* : They don't live again, have no further Opportunity to repent of what was ill done, or do what was undone. Help me therefore, O my God, to secure this main Point, this greatest Point ; to get ready for dying, dying with Safety and Comfort !

The COMPLAINT.

AND oh my Soul ! What Reason for Censure ? How undue and irregular thy Regards to the Body ? How much hast thou indulged it ? How quick thy Sense and Relish of its Pleasures and Gratifications ? *i. e. The Pleasures of a Brute.* How hast thou been caring for the Body ? making *Provision for the Flesh to fulfil the Lusts thereof* ? Bewail this, O my Soul, and take to thy self the Shame that is due : *Wilt not thou blush, as it were, when among the Angels, to think how low thou once stoopedst in the Drudgery of Sense, in serving divers Lusts and Pleasures ; how much thou debasedst thy rational Nature, and prostitutedst thy self to sordid impure Embraces !*

And O ! Wretch that I am, that I have pursued with so much Eagerness a perishing World ; a World I am just now dying out of : That I shou'd so much cleave to its Enjoyments, when I cannot but know they will shortly be to me as
if

if they had never been. *The Time is short: It remaineth, saith the Apostle, that they that have Wives, be as if they had none; and they that weep, as if they wept not; and they that rejoice, as if they rejoiced not; for the Fashion of this World passeth away.* But how little of this Indifferency has there been in the Temper of my Mind, and Course of my Acting; Alas! how carnal, how earthly am I? How much sold under Sin, and enslav'd to Sense? And in the mean time, how have I forgot my latter End, and put the evil Day far from me? I have rather talk'd and acted like one that dreams of an earthly Immortality, than like a Stranger on Earth; one that knoweth he has no continuing City, but is here to Day, and gone to Morrow. Oh may I receive proper Admonition from hence! Lord, help by thy Grace, forgive my Stupidity and Folly, and teach me henceforth *so to number my Days, that I may apply my Heart unto Wisdom.*

A Third Meditation on Death.

The RESOLUTION.

OH my Soul! change thy Measures, alter thy Course; act more consistently with thy Condition in the present World, and thy Belief of what is to come. What! art thou dying, and going out of the Body, going into another State, a State of a quite different Nature, of different Action and Enjoyment? Resolve upon a suitable Conduct; *particularly*, resolve to withdraw from the Body as far as thou canst; to mortify the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts thereof:

This is necessary to prepare and fit thee for the Happiness of an unbodied State. *Austin* suppos'd that such as died with earthly sensual Desires unmortified, retain'd those Desires in the other World, and felt the Uneasiness of them, which is the only *Purgatory* he could allow: But this won't, I presume, be the Case of holy Souls; when the House (the Body) is pull'd down, the Leprosy of Sin, with respect to them, will be perfectly cured. In the mean time, without some Progress in Mortification, no Heaven can be expected: *The pure in Heart* only shall see God. And the greater the Purity and Mortification, the fuller the Enjoyment.

Matt. v. 8.

*Bates's Four
last Things,
p. 98.*

I would *also* resolve to esteem this World more suitably to my Condition in it, and Relation to it; to consider my self as a Stranger, a Passenger, one that is leaving it, and accordingly wou'd govern my Affections to it, my Care and Concern about it. When *Chrysostom* was banish'd, and his Friend *Siriacus* lamented his Case, he writes back to him, and telleth him what his Sense of the Matter was: "You *now begin*, saith he, to
" bewail my Banishment, but I have done so for
" a long time; for since I knew Heaven was my
" Country, I have esteem'd the whole Earth as
" a State of Exilement: *Constantinople*, from
" whence I am expell'd, is as far distant from
" Paradise, as the Desert they send me to." And thus it is with me, this is my Condition; I am here a sort of an Exile; *from Home*: Oh my Soul! look to thy own Country, transfer thy Treasure
thither, *set thy Affections on things above, and not
on things on the Earth: Having Food and Raiment,*
saith the Apostle, *therewith be content.* And indeed 'tis enough for one in my Circumstances, that is leaving this World, and hastening to Eternity.

1 Tim. vi.
8.

nity. Resolve never to seek great things for thy self; suffer not the World to delude thee: If it begin to encroach, to insinuate and appear with its Flatteries and Charms; let the Thoughts of Mortality shew its Nakedness and Vanity and throw it under Foot, where it ought always to be. What vast Preparations do some Men make for an earthly Happiness? How restless their Projects! How boundless their Desires! They pluck down their Barns, and build greater, as if they had Goods laid, not only for many Years, but many Ages, or at least were aiming at such a Fund; and behold God smites their Gourd, and it withereth! Death arrests them in the midst of their Schemes, and in that very Hour their Thoughts perish! Oh my Soul, consider this, and learn Wisdom and Caution; endeavour to live disengag'd from the World: *If Riches increase, set not thy Heart upon them*: Buy as if thou possessedst not; and above all, beg, earnestly beg God would save thee from the (Temper of the) Men of this World, who have their Portion in this Life.

I would resolve and endeavour a Meetness for the other State; for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. Heaven must be begun here; the Foundation laid in the Disposition and Frame of the Mind. An unsanctified Person could not relish Heaven, was he admitted thither, no more than a Swine a Consort of Musick, or the Society of Angels. Lord, tune my Heart for the Work above!

I wou'd also resolve to be conversant in the other World in my Thoughts, Meditations and Desires, often ascending thither, placing my self in the Assembly of the Just, accompanying my departed Friends into their blessed Mansions,

joining, in my poor manner, in their Anthems, trying to sing the Song of Zion. This will make the Thoughts of Death easy to me, and the thing itself safe. I shall then go to a World and Work, which, in some measure, I know; and have that to comfort me at my Dissolution, the dying Martyr had, that *tho' I change my Place, yea not my Company.*

Further, I wou'd endeavour to have frequent Reference to this solemn and awful Period of *dying*, both in my Civil and Religious Affairs; endeavouring so to act all things, as that I may review my Work with Comfort in a dying Hour; often saying to my self. How will this look at Death? What Opinion shall I have of it, when Death stares me in the Face? Some there have been, who scarce put up a serious Prayer, without a special Reference to their latter End, and fervent Petitions for the divine Presence with them at that Time; nay, scarce awake out of Sleep, but the Scene of Death and Eternity opens before their Eyes. May this be the Bent and Frame of my Mind.

Joh. xvii.
4.

Lastly, I resolve, by the Grace of God, to hasten and dispatch my Preparation, that I may be able to say in my Measure, as my Lord and Master did, *Father, I have glorified thee on Earth, I have finished the Work thou gavest me to do.* I wou'd leave nothing undone that's necessary to be done; whatever my Hand finds to do, I wou'd do it *speedily*, lest that Day come upon me unawares. In short, if there be any Iniquity in my Hands, any Omissions, Neglects, unmortified Lusts, any thing that may make a Death-bed uneasy, I wou'd not rest till I have got it remov'd. These are my Purposes, my Resolutions: May they be establish'd!

The

The Colloquy and Aspiration.

AN D now, oh my God! I turn myself to thee: I want Wisdom, Courage, Zeal, Resolution for the Work before me: I want many Graces, and fresh Supplies of every Grace. I'm imprison'd and ensnar'd in this Body; surrounded with a Variety of Objects that strike upon my Senses, and dangerously insinuate themselves. Oh defend me by thy Grace! raise me above the animal Life; help me to regulate and govern the Passions and Inclinations of the Body; to withstand the Allurements of sensible things: Strengthen my Faith, my Views of Eternity, and enable me to look beyond *this Inch of Time*. And oh that I may be in good earnest! may I trifle no more in the Concerns of my Soul, and another World. I must die, I must die said one, when ask'd the Reason of his extraordinary Zeal and Diligence in Religion. O my Soul, think of dying, and live not for Eternity; redeem thy Time, improve thy Talents, discharge the Duties of thy Office, thy Place and Relations, as becomes a dying Man. Lord, help by thy Grace, work in me to will and to do of thy good Pleasure; to thee I resign my self, on thee I depend; keep what I have committed to thee against that Day; and when *I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death*, be thou with me, let *thy Rod and thy Staff* comfort me.

A Meditation

*A Meditation on the Immortality of the Soul.*A Second
Specimen.Ecclef. xii.
17.

—iii. 21.

HAVING put up a few Petitions for divine Assistance, you set your self to consider your Subject; and if you think proper to make a Text of Scripture the Foundation of your Discourse, that will not be unsuitable. *And the Spirit shall return to God who gave it; then shall the Dust return to the Earth, as it was, and the Spirit, &c.* which plainly implies, that the Soul dies not with the Body, it goes upwards. *It returns to God,* says the Text: And here, say you, I'll (1.) consider the Evidences of this great fundamental Doctrine of my Religion. (2.) Next briefly inquire what may be intended by that Phrase, *returneth unto God that gave it;* and then add practical Reflections. As to the Evidence of this Doctrine, I shall call to mind such Considerations, as I have found to have the greatest Weight with me; as,

1. That the Soul hath nothing in its own Nature that tendeth to, or threatens a Dissolution: 'Tis a pure, spiritual, immaterial Substance, not ^h compounded, or made up of jarring Principles or dissimilar Parts; it has no Seeds of Corruption in it self, and therefore supposing the Will of God to continue it, in its Existence and Being, there can be no Danger of its perishing.

2. The Dignity and Excellency of the Soul is an Argument for its Immortality: God has made Man but *a little lower than the Angels;* set him

^h *Et quum simplex animi natura esset, neque haberet in se quicquam admixtum dispar sui atque dissimile, non posse eum dividi.* Cic. de Senect.

him at the very Top of the Creation; constituted him his Representative in the World, and Lord over all the Creatures; and to qualify him for his Station and Rank, has distinguish'd him with the most excellent Faculties. We know indeed but little of our selves, of the Nature of our Faculties; and the manner of their Operations; but so much I can understand, as is a plain Intimation to me that I am not a *meer Body*: I find and feel in my self a Principle, distinct from Matter, and superiour to Sense; and when I consider it in all its Capacities, I cannot but infer it is design'd for Immortality. How noble, and even angelical a Power is that of the Understanding! It can penetrate into the secret Recesses of Nature; reason, infer, reflect and carry on a Chain of Thoughts with a clear Connection; can survey the whole Creation, ascend above it, and contemplate the glorious Author of all: So the Will, another Faculty of the human Soul, the Principle of all Freedom and Liberty, how excellent and even God-like a Power is it? It can chuse or refuse, and by a sovereign Sort of Empire, controul even the strongest and most impetuous Inclinations of the sensitive Appetite. Wou'd *Socrates* have taken the fatal Cup, and died a Martyr for the Unity of the Godhead, opposing the Superstition and Idolatry of the Country, had he not had an inward Principle, different from Body, and which over-ruled the Love of Life? In short, consider Man in all the Endowments of his Mind, in his Understanding, Will, Conscience, Memory, as acting under the Awe of God and Religion: Consider him in his Prospects and Views of Futurity; in all his Desires, Designs and Tendencies, how admirable a Creature will he appear? He is *nexus utriusque mundi*, by his Body allied to
this

this Earth, by his Spirit near a kin to Heaven : Hence ⁱ *Seneca* calls the Soul a God Sojourning in a human Body ; a certain domestick God, as another calleth it.

And can we imagine such a Creature made for a Day, as it were, or to exist only during its Union with the Body ? How much of our short Time is spent in Infancy and Non-age, when we can relish little but the animal Life, or Life of Sense, and scarce differ from meer Brutes, but in our Shape ? How much afterwards is pass'd away in childish Toys ? How long before we understand what 'tis to be Men, and how much longer often, before we know what 'tis to be Christians ? We are almost ready to leave the World, ere we rightly apprehend our Errand into it : And shall we suppose we are design'd for no After-existence ? Is it consistent with the Wisdom and Goodness of God, to frame so excellent a Creature purely for the present State ? to take a few Turns upon the Stage of the World, to taste of its Vanity and Curse, to sigh and weep a while, to view some Scenes of Sorrow and Folly, and then pass away

How's Vanity of Men mortal.

and be no more. “ If the Question were put, says one, Wherefore did God make Man ? Who wou'd not be asham'd so to answer it, He made him to eat and drink and take his Pleasures, to gather up Wealth, for he knows not Whom ; to use his Invention, that each one may become a Talk and Wonder to the rest ; and when he has fetch'd a few Turns upon the Theatre, and entertain'd the Eyes of Beholders with a short Scene of Impertinences descend, and never be heard of more ? What ! That he should

ⁱ *Quid aliud est anima quam Deus in corpore humano hospitans : Τις εἶπεν ὁ Οὐδς. Hierocles.*

“ should come into the World, furnish’d with
 “ such Powers and Endowments for this! It were
 “ a like Case if one shou’d be clad in Scarlet to
 “ go to plow, or curiously instructed in Arts
 “ and Sciences to attend Hogs.” The Dignity
 of Man’s Nature, the excellent Capacities of the
 rational Spirit, declare him not only capable of,
 but appointed to another State; and if we con-
 sider how short this Life is, how full of Vanity
 and Vexation, we can’t but infer it as a thing
 most agreeable to Reason, and the Perfections of
 the wise Creator, that such a Creator shou’d not
 be confin’d for his Being and Happiness, within
 the narrow Bounds of Time, but is *made for*
Immortality.

3. ’Tis considerable to my present Purpose,
 that there seems some Sense of Immortality im-
 press’d upon the whole rational Nature: All
 Mankind, *Pagans, Jews, Mabometans, and*
Christians, have discover’d an Apprehension of a
 future State: The Books of the ancient Philoso-
 phers, both *Greeks and Romans*, are full of it.
 (tho’ ’tis granted they treat the Subject as those
 that wanted the Help of Scripture-revelation)
Homer, who is suppos’d to have flourish’d near a
 thousand Years before Christ, speaks of a com-
 mon Receptacle for Souls, which he calls *Hades*,
 where good Men live in a pleasing Quiet, and
 wicked Men are condemn’d to very great Punish-
 ments: *Plato* discourses copiously upon the Soul’s
 Immortality, who flourish’d about 400 Years be-
 fore Christ; and *Thales* taught the same Doctrine
 in *Greece*, near 300 Years before him. In short,
 we have here what that great Philosopher *Cicero*
 calls the Law of Nature, (*viz.*) *the^k Consent of*
Nations.

^k Ψυχὴ ἀθάνατος, the Soul is immortal, saith one of the
 Philosophers,

2 Cor. v. Nations. I might add, the wiser and better any
 4- Part of Mankind have been, the more lively their
 Sense of Immortality; the stronger and more vi-
 2 Cor. v. gorous their Desires after it: *We that are in this Ta-
 4- bernacle, saith the Apostle, do groan, being burden-
 ed, not for that we wou'd be uncloath'd (mere dying
 was not the thing they aim'd at) but cloath'd upon,
 that Mortality might be swallowed up of Life.* Here
 they find themselves compass'd about with Infir-
 mity, at a distance from the chief Good, and
 wearied with constant Repetitions of Vanity; so
 that the *Apostle* does but speak the common Sense
 Rom. vii. of the best Saints, *O wretched Man that I am,
 24- who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death!*
 Now can I think, can I allow my self once to
 think, that there is nothing in the joint Suffrages
 of all Mankind in a matter of this nature! Will
 God delude and frustrate the Expectations of his
 Creatures? Disappoint the Desires he himself has
 planted in them, especially the Desires of his own
 Children, whom he has begotten again unto a lively
 Hope?

4. I may argue the Certainty of another State,
 and of the Soul's Immortality from the Justice of
 God: Rewards and Punishments, eternal Re-
 wards and Punishments, are the Sanctions of the
 Divine Law. He has said, *It shall be well with
 Ia. iii. 10, the Righteous, for they shall eat the fruit of their Do-
 11. ings; and that it shall be ill with the Wicked, for
 the Reward of his Hands shall be given him.* God
 will

Philosophers, in so many Words. *Plutarch* in a consolatory
 Discourse to *Apollonius* upon the Death of his Son, almost co-
 pieth the Words of *Solomon*: He is gone, saith he, whither
 he came from; the Earth to Earth again, *Πνεῦμα ὅδε ἐστίν*,
 but the Spirit is ascended, gone upwards, (*i. e.*) returned to
 God: And in the like Strain many others of them speak.

will make a Distinction between the Good and the Bad, between those that fear him, and fear him not: This he has declared he will do; and we may infallibly conclude it from the Justice of his Nature, *the Judge of all the Earth will do right.* But this is so far from being done in the present World, that the unequal Distributions of Providence have been the Offence of all Ages: *Wherefore,* says the Prophet, *doth the Way of the Wicked prosper? Wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?* And Solomon observes it, as an Instance of that Vanity, which was his Complaint and Exercise; *That there is a just Man that perisheth in his Righteousness, and there is a wicked Man that longeth his Life in his Wickedness.* The Inference from which must be, as he himself elsewhere makes it, *God shall judge the Righteous and the Wicked* (i. e.) *Hereafter,* when Things come to be review'd by the great Governour of the World, *then* all shall be rectified, and a Decision made in favour of the Righteous. So that thou hast, O my Soul, the fullest Assurance of thy own future Existence. God rules the World by Hopes and Fears, and fills the Minds of Men with Presages of Eternity. It would be Blasphemy to suppose that these are groundless, a mere Fiction and Contrivance to keep the World in awe; consequently all shall be made good in an After-state; the Promises fulfill'd, the Threatnings executed, and the Soul exist for ever, that it may receive its Retribution.

5. With me who am a Christian, it confirms my Belief of this great Article of the Immortality of the Soul, that the Son of God thought not his own precious Blood too great a Price for its Redemption. Man, by his Apostacy, had forfeited his Happiness, and in that respect *lost his Soul;*

Soul; to recover which was the Design of the Lord Jesus in his Undertaking: And how expensive and costly a Work was it! How great his Condescension, how low did he stoop! Being in the Form of God, he took upon him the Form of a Servant, and in that State and Condition he liv'd. During his private Life, I find him employ'd as an ordinary Mechanick; hence he's not only call'd *The Carpenter's Son*, but *The Carpenter*, And *Justin Martyr* saith, *He made Ploughs and Harrows*. When he entered upon the Stage of publick Action, Poverty and Contempt still followed him; he had *not where to lay his Head*, lived upon Contribution, endured the Contradiction of Sinners, Malice of Men, and Rage of Devils: And how amazing his last Conflicts in the Garden! Particularly, when he sweat *Drops of Blood*, and on the Cross, when he cried out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* How reproachful and grievous the Circumstances of his Death? He was mock'd, revil'd, spit upon, smote on the Face, pierc'd, crown'd with Thorns, and crucified; hung up between Heaven and Earth, as one worthy of neither; where he died a Publick Victim, a Spectacle to Angels and Men! And such a Spectacle the World never saw before! The only begotten of the Father dying upon a Cross! Well might the Rocks rend, and the Sun hide its Face!

Mark vi. 3.

Mat. viii.

20.

Luke viii.

3.

—xxii. 44.

Mat. xxvii.

46.

And what was all this for? What meant this strange thing, the Lord from Heaven united to Flesh, tabernacling in a human Body, groaning, bleeding, dying! What was the Design of all this? Was it only to purchase a short Life of Vanity, after which there is to be an End of my Being, Capacities, Enjoyments for ever! To suppose this, wou'd be to blaspheme my Redeemer, and

and count the *Blood of the Covenant an unholy, (i. e.)* a common *thing*. O my Soul, see thy own Worth in the Price that was paid for thee, and infer hence thy immortal Nature: If the Soul be not immortal, Christ died in vain, and the Work of Redemption is a Jest.

6. My *Bible* puts this Matter out of all doubt. The Text informs me, that, at Death, when the Body returns to the Earth, *the Spirit returns to God*. *Job* speaks of it, as a Matter of full Certainty with him, that when *the Worms had destroy'd his Body*, he should yet *see God*. And how clear the *Job xix. 26.* Testimony of this Truth from the blessed Jesus, the faithful *AMEN?* In my Father's House, saith *John xiv.* he, *are many Mansions; I will receive you to my self.* 2, 3. And again, *Fear not them that kill the Body, but Matth. x.* *are not able to kill the Soul*. He supposes the Body 28. may be destroyed, and yet the Soul untouch'd; plainly signifying, that 'tis a Principle distinct from the Body, and can subsist without it. He tells the converted Thief on the Cross, that that Day he should *be with him in Paradise*. And in *Luk. xxiii.* the Moment of his own Dissolution, commended 43. his Spirit into the Hands of his Father. And to — *xxiii.* mention no more, with how much Solemnity are 46. the dead pronounced blessed, *Blessed are the Dead Rev. xiv.* — *their Works follow them* (i. e.) into the other 13. State, where they find and enjoy a Blessedness. And, O my Soul! canst thou hesitate about a Doctrine that has so great Authority to support it? That is confirm'd by so many Testimonies from Heaven?

Nor do I want, 7. What I may call a *sensible Evidence* of a future State of Existence: To say nothing of the Stories of Apparitions, or the Appearance of departed Spirits; which yet I apprehend are not to be wholly neglected, as of no Weight in this Question, purely because too ma-

ny of these Stories are Fable. There have been lying Wonders, false Miracles; but that's no Argument against true ones, or that there never were any such: But not to insist on this, the Scripture affords Instances of departed Spirits, subsisting in a State of Separation, and sometimes returning back again into our World; as that of the *Sbunamite's* Son. That of *Jairus's* Daughter. And of *Lazarus*. The Apostle *Peter* speaks of *Spirits in Prison*, (i. e.) the Spirits of those that died in the Days of *Noah*. And the Apostle *Jude* of the *Sodomites* (destroy'd by Fire so many Ages before) as then *suffering the Vengeance of eternal Fire*, Jude 7. And when *Christ* was transfigured, I find *Moses* and *Elias* appearing upon the Mount with him. Now these and the like Instances are such Arguments for the Point I am considering, as amount to a sort of a *sensible Demonstration*. Supposing the Truth of Scripture History, I have the same Satisfaction that Spirits exist separate from the Body, and live in another World, as if I saw them descend from thence in their Vehicles, or had my self been visited by some of my departed Friends. Nay, the Evidence here is stronger; for in the one Case I might suspect Delusion, which the Testimony of Scripture in these Examples secures me from. O my Soul! be established in the Belief of this Doctrine; here is sufficient Proof of thine Immortality, such as thou mayest rest in without Fear of Imposture. When the Body dieth, the Spirit dies not with it, but returns to God.

2 King. iv.

18.

Matt. ix.

18.

John xi.

39.

1 Pet. iii.

19.

Mat. xxvii.

3.

A Second Meditation on the Soul's Immortality.

AS the Spirit subsists after the Death of the Body, so I am here told it returns to God who gave it. How returns? What may this import?

1. It may imply, that the Spirit *is from God* in a special Sense; in a more immediate manner than the Body is. Hence 'tis said, that *God gave it*, and elsewhere he is called, *the Father of Spirits*, Heb. xii. (i. e.) by way of Eminency and Distinction. 9.

2. It returns to God, (*viz.*) into his immediate Presence: *Whilst at home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord.* This Body is, as a Veil or Covering, interpos'd between God and the Soul, which hinders the Perception and Sight of God; but Death draws aside the Veil, and represents the divine Majesty to naked unbodied Spirits, after a very different manner than before. Good Men behold his Face in Righteousness, and see him as he is, in his pure and more immediate Glory; not thro' a Glass darkly, as now in the Body, but Face to Face. Wicked Men also, upon this Return, behold in a full Light what once they so little thought of; they find the Scales fallen from their Eyes, and see God in all his Terrors. Now they are cured of their Infidelity, and with the Devils believe and tremble. *Fall on us, O ye Rocks, say they, and hide us from the Face of him that sits upon the Throne.* 2 Cor. v. 6.

3. It returns to give an Account: Here 'tis upon Trial, and in a State of Probation; at Death, it returns to render an Account to its Creator and Lord; an Account how it used the

Body; its Senses, Appetites, Members; how it acted in its several Relations and Capacities, during its Abode in the Body; how it improv'd its Time, Talents, Enjoyments, and Opportunities of doing or getting Good: In short, to give an Account of *all the things done in the Body*; of its entire Conduct towards God and Man. O may I not mistake my great Business, and *return, re infectâ*, the Work of Life undone! It would be better for me to be annihilated, sink into nothing, than see the Face of my God, and *return to him*, having forgot my Errand. O my Soul! labour that, whether present or absent, thou mayst be accepted of God: Assist me, Lord, by thy Grace.

4. The Spirit returns to God to be judged by him, and receive its Sentence for Eternity. *We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, saith the Apostle, that every one may receive the things done in the Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* Every one's State is determined immediately upon his Dissolution: Not that he has then *the full Retribution*, either in Happiness or Misery; but the Sentence is past, either of Life or Death, and that for ever, which afterwards will be confirm'd with the Solemnity and Awefulness of a future Judgment. No sooner
- 2 Cor. v. 10. was the rich Man in the Parable dead, but *he lift up his Eyes in Torments*; and when Lazarus died, he was immediately *carried by Angels into Abraham's Bosom*. O may I stand in a good Lot, may I find Mercy at that Day! and when Christ, who is my Life, shall appear, appear with him in Glory.
- Luk. xxvi. 22, 23.

The INSTRUCTION.

I. **H**OW grateful and acceptable should this *Application.*
 Doctrine be to me? Did this Life limit
 my Duration, and bound my Hopes, I might just-
 ly take up the Psalmist's Complaint, *Remember Ps. lxxxix.*
how short my Time is : Wherefore hast thou made all
Men in vain? Few and evil, saith the good Patriarch,
are the Years of my Pilgrimage ; which is true of *Gen. xlvii.*
 all Mankind. Our Duration here scarce deserves
 to be called Life ; it is a *short something* between *Job xiv. 1.*
 being born and dying, pass'd over in the Distri-
 butions of Times and Seasons to every Purpose,
In the midst of Life, we are in Death. And as 'tis *Ecclef. iii.*
 short, so 'tis troublesome, and often grievous.^{2.}
 How full of Labour are all things? How little
 to be attain'd here, worthy the Name of an Hap-
 piness to a rational Creature? If I taste of any
 Enjoyment that seems agreeable, it hath so many
 Alloys, such a Mixture of bitter Ingredients in
 it, that it is hard to say, whether the Good or
 Evil of it be greater, which is most predomi-
 nant.

Or if in any State and Circumstance of things
 I find some little Rest, something that looks like
 an Happiness, such as it is, how transient, how
 changeable and short-liv'd? It may be, I have a
 few calm bright Days, but then presently the
 Clouds gather again, my Horizon fills with Dark-
 ness, and the comfortable Scene is withdrawn: So
 that my Life here, at best, is but a Piece of che-
 quered Work, made up of Intervals of Pain and
 Pleasure; to-day I put off my Sackcloth, and gird
 me with Gladness; to-morrow the Sable comes on
 again: And thus I go the Round, Tears and Joy
 mutually succeeding. And how vain, how wretched

a Creature should I be, had I no future Prospects? And how cruel and inhuman the Attempts of those, who would deprive me thereof; who endeavour to degrade their own Species, and set them upon a Level with the Beasts that perish; One might say to them, as was said in another Case, *Parcite, Homunculi, unicæ spei totius humani generis*: Spare the only Hopes of Mankind. *But, O my Soul! come not thou into their Secret, unto their Assembly, mine Honour, be not thou united.* Resolve, never to quit a Doctrine that is the great Support and ¹ Dignity of thy Nature: Was it only probable, no wise Man would willingly part with it; much less, when it stands upon so sure a Foundation.

2. This Doctrine affords a proper Relief against the Fear of Death To die, what is that? Only to leave thy Body, not to lose thy own Being. 'Tis to be set at Liberty, releas'd from thy Bonds and Fetters, discharg'd from thy Prison, and properly to live. *Blessed are the Dead*:

———*dicique beatus*
Ante obitum nemo supremaque funera debet.

¹ Theff.
13.

Death's a Passage to Immortality, to Happiness; so that in this Matter we *sorrow not as those that have no Hope*; and consequently should represent Death to our selves, not in the Terror of a destructive Enemy, but as doing a kind Office. *Pythagoras's* Fancy of the Transmigration of the Soul (its passing at Death into another Body, and so

¹ Si in hoc erro, quod Animos hominum immortales esse credam, libenter erro; nec mihi hunc errorem, quo delector, dum vivo extorqueri volo; sin mortuus (ut minuti Philosophi censent) nihil sentiam, non vereor ne hunc errorem meum mortui Philosophi irrideant. *Cic. de Senect.*

so enjoying Life again) made his Disciples fearless of dying: But here is firmer Ground of Courage and Comfort; not only *another*, but a *better* Life in view, and a sure Evidence concerning it. And how should this take off the Dread of dying? "If to die, saith *Socrates*, be to go to another Place, and those who have departed this Life are with God, what greater Good can there be?" He adds, "For this I would willingly die over and over again." O my Soul! learn to think of Death with Calmness and Composure; thou needest not, shouldst not through Fear of it, be all thy Life-time subject to Bondage. The ^m Philosopher says justly, Death is only terrible to them, *who with Life lose all*: But this is not the Christian's Case. Believe Immortality, and fear not Death.

In the mean time, 3. The Comfort of this Doctrine is confin'd. Immortality, or a future eternal Existence after Death, speaketh Comfort to *some*, but not to *all*; 'tis like the Pillar of Fire, and a Cloud, that was Light to *Israel*, but Darkness to the *Egyptians*: To some it is as the Savour of Death, *viz.* to the Ungodly, that have their Hope and Happiness in this Life only. Did it only put an End to their present Gratifications, it would be melancholy enough to them; to have all their Dreams vanish, their pleasing Imaginations destroy'd at once; to be torn away from all their dear Enjoyments for ever, is dismal and shocking. But this is not the worst of it: When the rich Man, in the Parable died, his Pomp and Pleasure died with him; no more Purple and fine Linen, no more sumptuous Fare; nay, not a

K 4

Drop

^m Mors iis terribilis, quorum cum vitâ *omnia* extinguuntur. *Cic.*

Drop of Water to cool his Tongue. But that is not all, *he was tormented in Flame*: And thus it is with all that live as he did; that believe not *Moses* and the Prophets; that neglect their Souls and another World; that spend their Time in Pomp and Pleasure: Death is the *King of Terrors to them*, it carries them *into utter Darknes*, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of Teeth.

A Third Meditation on the Immortality of the Soul.

4. **I**F the Soul be immortal, I may hence learn to rate and value Things, viz. by their Reference to Immortality, I have two States of Existence, or Being; one in the Body, the other out of it; one in Time, the other in Eternity; one for a Moment, the other for everlasting; which affords a sure Rule to direct me what to chuse, and what to prefer. 'Tis plain, the Things which are confin'd to my present State and Duration, can be but of little Account, compared with the Concernments of Eternity. Seneca contemplating the Greatness and Beauty of those Orbs of Light above, casts down his Eyes to find out the Earth, hardly visible at that Distance, and breaks forth into a philosophical Disdain:

“ Is it this to which the great Designs and vast Desires of Men are confin'd? Is it for this there is such a Disturbance of Nations, Wars, and shedding of Blood? Oh Folly, O Fury of deceived Men! to imagine great Kingdoms in the Compass of an Atom; to raise Armies, to divide a Point of Earth with their Swords: it

Bates's Im-
mortality of
the Soul,
280.

“ it is just as if the Ants should conceive a
 “ Field to be several Kingdoms, and fiercely con-
 “ tend to enlarge their Borders, and celebrate a
 “ Triumph in gaining a Foot of Earth, as a new
 “ Province to their Empire.” And from hence he
 excites Men to ascend in their Thoughts, and
 take an intellectual Possession of the material Hea-
 vens, as most worthy of their Minds. Earthly things
 are so little and mean, compar’d with the things of
 the other World, that they scarce deserve a so-
 licitous Thought, especially when the Inequality
 of our Duration in this and that World is con-
 sidered. How justly does the same Philosopher
 elsewhere cry out, *Nisi ad studium cælestium homo*
admitteretur, non fuerit operæ pretium nasci: O
quam contempta res sit homo, nisi supra humana se
erexerit? It wou’d not be worth while for a Man
 to be born and live, did he not study heavenly
 things: How contemptible a thing is that which
 we call *Man*, unless he raise himself above earthly
 and bodily Enjoyments? O my Soul! compare
 thy present with thy future Existence, and never
 call any thing great and good, that reaches no
 further than this Moment of Time, that will not
 accompany thee into the other World, and has
 no Connection with Immortality. *We look not,* ^{2 Cor. iv.}
says the Apostle, at things which are seen, which 18.
are temporal. They made them not their Scope,
 and indeed wou’d scarce glance at ’em, cast an
 Eye upon them. The things which are seen, the
 things of time, are but Cyphers in themselves;
 ’tis Eternity, that like Figures added to them,
 gives them their Significancy and Worth!

Consequently, 5. ’Tis evident to a Demonstra-
 tion my chief Concern ought to be about Immor-
 tality, to secure the Interest and Welfare of the
 Soul, the never dying Part. I am directed not to
 labour

labour for the Meat that perishes; of which Nature are all earthly things that go no further than the Body. I ought to be indifferent about these things; my Labour, my most earnest Contention and Care, is due to eternal things, the Meat that endures to everlasting Life. O may I always be affected towards *this* World, and *that* World, as the Affairs of both require! May I consider and adjust their several Claims and Interests; love both according to their Value and Importance to me. This is a Point of the greatest Wisdom, a Mistake in which is the main Cause of Ruin to those

Mr. How's
Vanity of
Man as mortal.

that perish. “ We should (says a divine Author, “ from the present Doctrine) endeavour to calm In- “ difference, and dispassionate Temper of Mind “ towards the various Objects and Affairs that “ belong to this Life. There are very narrow “ Limits set already by the Nature of the things “ themselves; and 'tis the Part of Wisdom and “ Justice to set the proportionable Bounds to all “ the Thoughts, Cares and Passions we will suf- “ fer to stir in our Minds, with reference to “ them. Nothing is a more acknowledged “ Character of a Fool, than upon every slight “ Occasion, to be in a Transport; to be much “ taken with empty things betokens an empty “ Spirit; a rational Authority, Continency and “ Dominion over one's self, must be maintained, “ that we never be so affected with any thing, “ but the Object may be able to justify and war- “ rant the Affection: Consequently we shall “ rarely meet with any temporal Concern that “ ought to move us; both for the Littleness of “ such things themselves, and that we have so un- “ speakably greater things in view. How con- “ temptibly should we look upon that empty Va- “ nity, *being rich*! The Pursuit of so despicable “ a Trifle,

“ a Trifle, with violent and peremptory Desires,
 “ so as hereby to suffer a Diversion from our
 “ Designs for another World, is to make our
 “ eternal Hopes less than nothing. And with
 “ the like Neglect should all sensual Pleasures,
 “ secular Honours, Dignities, &c. be treated.
 “ We are to act with Coolness and Indifferency
 “ as to all these things, and to manifest it to all;
 “ to declare it *plainly*, by a constant uniform
 “ Course of Action, that we are Pilgrims and
 “ Strangers on the Earth, and are seeking a
 “ better Country.

“ That lofty Soul, adds he, that bears about
 “ with it the Apprehension of being made for an
 “ everlasting State, so earnestly intends it, that it
 “ shall ever be a Condescension and Vouchsafe-
 “ ment with it, if it allow it self to take notice
 “ what busy Mortals are doing in their (as they
 “ reckon them) grand Negotiations here below.
 “ *We of this Academy* (says the Philosopher to the
 “ jealous Tyrant) *are not at leisure to mind so mean*
 “ *things* (as the Concerns of his Court) *We have*
 “ *something else to do, than to talk of you.* With
 “ how much more Reason may the Christian say
 “ this? He hath still the Image before his Eye of
 “ this World vanishing and passing away; of the
 “ other, with the everlasting Concernments of it,
 “ even now ready to take place, and fill up all
 “ the Stage.” Oh may the Affairs of Immortali-
 ty thus fill my Mind, and the Affairs of this Earth,
 of this *τοῦ νῦν*, this *short now*, and Moment of
 Life shrink, and lie as Dust under my Feet!

Nor is this to be lookt upon as mere Rhetoricati-
 on, a Flourish of Words; 'tis no more than what
 a just Comparison of Time and Eternity will ad-
 mit and suggest. Suppose the present Life and
 Duration (consisting I'll say of eighty Years) di-
 vided

vided into two Periods; *into one Month, and into seventy nine Years eleven Months*: Suppose also the Month was preparatory, and a sort of an Introduction to the other Period, when the whole State and Circumstances should undergo a mighty Change, and that according to our Behaviour *in the Month*? Who sees not the Concerns of the *seventy nine Years* are greatest? Wou'd not Reason and common Sense direct to prefer Comfort and Happiness, in that long Duration, to every thing that might pretend to it in the foregoing Month? Wou'd it not be an Excess of Folly, and even Madness, to pass the Month in Sport, in Vanity and Pleasures, or in little Cares and Business, *relating to that short Space only*, while the other Duration was neglected? (*i. e.*) to be happy for a Month at the Hazard of being a Slave and miserable for eighty Years. Wou'd not the Month's Probationer, as I may call him, did he act with common Prudence, have his chief Reference to the After-Period? Wou'd he think of indulging his Ease and Pleasure, if this was like to entail Misery upon him hereafter? Nay, wou'd he not despise every thing of that kind? Especially when he considered, the more self-denied he was, the more diligent to improve in the Month, the more comfortable and happy he shou'd be in the After-Duration. This Month, says he, will soon be over, and then I shall be happy, and enjoy my self for many Years. Oh my Soul! this is a faint Resemblance of thy Circumstances in Life: Thou art here *a few Days*, and Eternity remains. Now is thy Seed-time for everlasting: As thou sowest here, thou shalt reap hereafter. Look therefore to Eternity, and be little concern'd about the Month, *this Moment of Time*; provide for everlasting: Remember *one thing is needful*; and put

put on the Resolution of the pious Martyr, who when he was bid to take Care of himself, replied, *So I will of my bestⁿ self*, meaning the immortal Soul.

The Soliloquy and Complaint.

BUT oh my Soul! how hast thou forgot thy self, forgot thy Relation to Eternity, thy future Existence, and the Concernments thereof? How unduly affected hast thou been towards this and the other World? How have the Vanities and Amusements of this short Moment of Being and Duration, confin'd and engross'd thy Thoughts and Cares? Eternity is so awful a Sound, that it should carry thy Mind above the things of Time, and quite drown the Noise of them, as the Report of a Cannon doth that of a Whisper. But alas! how much otherwise has it been, and is it with me? How have I wasted my Affections upon present Dreams and Shadows, rejoicing and weeping over a Clod of Earth! Like the poor *Ephramite*, that cried after his *Teraphim*, *They have taken away my Gods*, saith he, *and what have I more?* *Judg. xviii.* With what *Ovation*, and sort of Triumph, do we²⁴ talk of what we call an Estate, *My Estate*, when in a Map of the World it would scarce be discernible; one might cover it with a Pin's Head? I can't but sometimes think with my self, how the *Angels* pity us, and smile at us, when they look down upon our laborious and solicitous Pursuits of such minute things. Oh Wretch that I am! that my Mind is so much depress'd, and drawn down to this Earth, that I can no better extend my Views. Lord, anoint mine Eyes with

ⁿ Anima cujusque est quisque.

with Eye-salve; grant me that Faith which is the *Substance of things hoped for, the Evidence of things not seen!*

The RESOLUTION.

AND am I immortal? Doth my Spirit at Death *return to God*, and exist for ever in a separate State? I would henceforth resolve *to live for Eternity*, to prepare for my *Return*. In order to which I resolve (Lord, help me by thy Grace) to have my Eye fixed on the other World; and, in all my Designs, Undertakings and Actions, to preserve a constant Reference thither. I would esteem every thing as little, as nothing comparatively, that's calculated only for the Meridian of Time, that serveth only a present State. I resolve to chuse, prefer, pursue things, as they stand related to Eternity; judging of them by this Mark and Property, *as they signify for another World, relate to Eternity, and contribute to the Blessedness of it*. I resolve not to look at the things that are *seen*, but at the things that are *unseen*; and what concerneth only the Body and Time, shall have little of my Thought and Care. O my Soul! thus I resolve: Lord, strengthen and confirm me by thy Grace.

I resolve to be often *returning* before-hand to my God, resigning and committing my Spirit to him, *to keep it against that Day*; keep it safe from the Injuries, Snares and Temptations of its bodied State, and the Impressions of sensible Objects; returning to him in a way of solemn Devotion, delighting in him, conversing with him, comforting and refreshing my self in the best manner I can in his special Presence; that at my *last*
Return

Return at Death, I may not go to a God I have been estranged from.

Above all, I would resolve to get my Heart fram'd and form'd for a blessed Immortality : I would make it the great Business, and Work of my Religion and Life, to cultivate and improve my Mind, that I may be meet for Paradise, meet for the Happiness of the separate immortal State : Particularly, I resolve to seek and endeavour after a Weanedness from the Body, “ a Re-
 “ finedness from this Earth, a thorough Purga-
 “ tion of all undue Degrees of sensual Affection;
 “ a Consumption of my Dross by a sacred Fire
 “ from Heaven; an Aptitude to spiritual Ex-
 “ ercises and Enjoyments ; high Complacency in
 “ God, fervent Love: a worshipping Posture of
 “ Soul, form'd to the Veneration of the eternal
 “ Wisdom, Goodness, Power and Holiness :
 “ Profound Humility, and Abnegation of self ;
 “ a prayerful Frame of Spirit, much us'd to
 “ Gratulations and Thanksgivings: A large and
 “ universal Love, imitating, as much as pos-
 “ sible, the divine Love; a steady Composure
 “ and serene Temper of Spirit, not boisterous,
 “ nor apt to create Storms to my self or the
 “ World; every way suited to the blissful Regi-
 “ ons, where nothing but perfect Purity, en-
 “ tire Devotedness to God; Love, Goodness,
 “ Benignity, Well-pleasedness, Order and Peace,
 “ shall have Place for ever. This, O my Soul!
 “ thou oughtest to be constantly intent upon ;
 “ this should be thy daily Work, (*viz.*) to get
 “ thy Spirit so attempered and fitted to Heaven,
 “ that if thou be asked what Design thou drivest,
 “ what thou art doing, thou mayest be able to
 “ make this true Answer, *Thou art dressing thy*
 “ *self for Eternity.*”

*How's Van-
 nity of Man
 as mortal.*

The ASPIRATION.

O My God! the Father of Spirits, who hast form'd and fashion'd them, and hast the immediate Conduct and Government of them, visit this Soul of mine; enlighten, purify, sanctify me throughout; fit me for thine Embraces; help me to breathe after Immortality; to be separating my self more and more from this World and Body; and more constantly to intend and seek the other World; to press towards it, and long for Admission thither: I would be patient of the Body; but not fond of it, considering *a good Man should only need Leave to die*. Lord, assist me, by thy Grace to attain this Indifferency, to die daily, and to live for Immortality. May I be trimming my Lamps, adorning as a Bride for her Husband. I leave the Worldling to pursue his Dust; 'tis an intellectual spiritual Treasure I would be ambitious of. O may I be arrayed in Gold of Ophir! May I be all glorious within, and be brought to the King, at last, in Raiment of Needle-work; be cloath'd with white Raiment; and I shall little regard other Ornaments: Lord, for thee I wait:

*O come thou down to me,
Or take me up to Thee.*

A Meditation on the Resurrection of the Just.

A Third
Specimen.

HAVING begged the divine Presence, Assistance and Blessing, and chose some Scripture, as the Foundation of your Discourse; as that

that *Luke* xiv. 14. *Thou shalt be recompensed at the Resurrection of the Just*, you may proceed thus :

1. Say you, I will consider what I am to expect under the Resurrection.

2. Take notice of the Properties and Qualities of the Resurrection-Body.

3. Review the Grounds and Principles upon which the Doctrine stands; and consider the Arguments by which the Truth and Certainty of it is established.

4. Apply all to myself.

1. I am to consider what I am to expect under the Notion of a Resurrection.

First, At the Resurrection, and as included in it, I expect *a Body*. The *Anastasis*, or Resurrection implies more than the Existence of the Soul, and its Life in a separate State; the literal and proper meaning of the Word is *rising again*; which supposeth that something fell, which can be only the Body. Hence it is said to be *of the Dead*. It is of those that were in the Grave. What is meant by the Resurrection
Mat. xxiii. 31.
 Now the Soul cannot be said to have died, or have been in the Grave; consequently the Resurrection is of the Body. And so the Apostle intimates, *He shall quicken our mortal Body*; *ζωοποιήσει*, he shall make it live again. Acts xxiii. 6. John v. 28. Rom. viii. 11.

Secondly, As I expect a Body, so I expect *the same Body*, that my Soul is now united to. *This corruptible*, says the Apostle, *must put on Incorruption*: This mortal (*τὸ φθαρτὸν τοῦτο*) that same thing, that was corruptible and mortal, shall be rais'd, and be made incorruptible and immortal. To the same Purpose, *Rom. viii. 23*. We wait for *the Redemption of our Bodies*. So *Phil. iii. 23*. *He shall change our vile Body*. We shall not only have a Body, but *our Body*; our own Body; this shall be redeem'd from Corruption, and chang'd; *the same Temple* that

was demolished, shall be reared up again. This is the Doctrine of Scripture, and accordingly the ancient Church ° express their Faith, *Resurrectio carnis*; the Resurrection of the Flesh being an Article in all their Creeds. So that there seems too much Boldness in that of a Philosophick Writer. “Suppose (says he) a Person die in *England*, “and

King on the Creed, p. 398. ° There were several in the primitive Church that professed to believe the Resurrection of the Body or of a *Body*, but not of the *same* Body which now we have; but instead thereof they imagined, that at the Resurrection Day there wou'd be framed, by the Power of God, thin, subtle, aerial Bodies, whereunto human Souls should be joined, in lieu of these gross material fleshy Bodies, which they now actuate and inform; in Opposition to whom the Word *Flesh* was inserted in the *Creed*, as being of a more determinate Sense. The *Originists*, saith *Jerom*, profess the Belief of the future Resurrection of the Body; and because there are celestial and terrestrial Bodies, and the Air and *Æther*, according to them, are called Bodies, therefore they use the Word *Body*, and not *Flesh*; and as this was a Controversy at that time, so the Fathers are very express and distinct in declaring their Faith, and maintaining what they took to be the Christian Doctrine. *Ruffinus* particularly, (being, it seems, under some Suspicion with Reference to this Point) We confess, says he, that the Resurrection of our *Flesh* shall be whole and perfect, of *this our Flesh*, wherein we now live; for we do not say, as some have slandered us, that another Body shall rise instead of this, but that it shall be *this very same Body*, without the Loss of any of its Members, or the Defect of any Part of the Body, unto which nothing of its Nature shall be wanting, except Corruption: And agreeable hereto, is the *Aquileian Creed*, the Article runs thus: I believe the Resurrection *hujus Carnis, of this Flesh*. In another Creed (that of *Damasus*) 'tis thus expressed, We believe we shall be raised with the same real Members and *Flesh*, in which we now live. *Jerome* declares, that the Catholick Faith can't be maintained, unless it be admitted that a Body with *Flesh* and Bones, Blood and Members, be restored. Another of these Creeds has it; We confess that, according to the Example of our Head, there shall be a true Resurrection of the *Flesh* of all the Dead; neither do we believe we shall rise in an aerial, or any other kind of Body,

“ and be buried in one of our Church-yards, and
 “ God should form him a Body out of one of the
 “ Mountains of *Peru*, it might properly be call-
 “ ed a Resurrection:” But methinks not *very*
properly; a Creation it might be called, but not
 a Resurrection, which seems to include, in the
 Notion of it, a Renovation or Restitution.

What identifies, or goes to constitute the same
 Body, as the Scripture has not told us, we can’t
 pretend to be certain; and therefore with respect
 thereto, can have no determinate Faith. Its
Sameness does not imply, that it shall have the
 same numerical Particles of Matter that *ever* it
 had in this Life. In this Sense our Body is not the
 same in Infancy, Childhood, Youth, and old
 Age. It is in a constant flowing State, passeth
 away by insensible Perspiration, and in the Course
 of a few Years (seven as many have computed)
 undergoes a Change; receiving new Flesh, and
 new Particles of Matter, at the Revolution of
 so many Years: And it is absurd to suppose,
 that these Particles, that is, all the Matter

L. 2

that

Body, as some have dream’d, but in the very Flesh we now live in. Their Design herein was to guard against several Opinions, which they apprehended inconsistent with the Doctrine of the Resurrection, as, 1. The Opinion of those who believ’d the Soul should have *no Body*, except some fine Vehicle it might receive immediately from its Separation. Vide *Body* of Resurrection, where many Examples of this kind are collected.

2. Of those that believed God would make it a *new Body* out of other Particles and other Matter, an aerial or æthereal Body.

3. Of those who believed the Resurrection of the same Body, but not of an *entire Body*, with the same Organs and Members, with the same Form and Shape with the present Body. Against all these they formed their Article, and proceeded to settle and determine the Faith (it may be with too much Positiveness and Nicety of Decision, going further than they had Clearness and Warrant from Scripture.)

that constituted the Body from our Birth to our Death, shall be re-united in the Resurrection-Body.

*Body on the
Resurrecti-
on, p. 188.*

Nor is it likely the Body, when rais'd, shall have the same Patticles of Matter (neither more nor less) which were laid in the Grave. It is enough, says one, who has carried this Point as far as most, that such Particles are rais'd, as make up the integrant or necessary Parts of the Body; such as remain after the utmost Degree of Maceration, without which the Body would be imperfect: And these necessary Parts are chiefly the Bones, Skin, the Nerves, Tendons, Ligaments, and the Substance of the several Vessels.

Others have thought that God will collect, out of all the Particles that ever entered the Composition of the human Body, and belong'd to it; collect *out of them all*, the Matter of the Resurrection-Body: So that the more permanent and necessary Parts of the Body, which it had at Death, and in some measure always had, and some flowing Particles in every State of the Body and Time of Life; these collected by the divine Power shall constitute the Body at the Resurrection. But I can consider this and other ^p Hypotheses of this kind only as Speculation, and not propounded them to my self as Matters of Faith. I wou'd not pretend to be herein wise above what is written: As this Doctrine depends entirely upon Revelation,

^p The modern Philosophers are of Opinion, since the late microscopical Discoveries, that as Plants and Herbs derive themselves from Seeds, so Animals proceed from proper Animalcula; and they suppose the human Body, particularly one of the Animalculæ, grown and encreased by the Expansion of its numerous minute Vessels. The Solids, that were folded up in so small a Compass, are swelled to the Size they afterwards arrive

velation, I wou'd confine my self, in all my Reasonings, within the Bounds and Limits thereof. It is enough for me to know, that I shall have a Body; a Body, *in some respects*, the same; this the Scripture sufficiently intimates, and I will depend on the Promise and Providence of God for Performance.

3. At the Resurrection, and as included therein, I expect the same Spirit, in a State of Union with the same Body; that *this Body* and this *Soul* shall be again united in one Person: It is no improper Account of the Matter, which a learned Rabbi *Maimon.* gives, when he calls the Resurrection, "The Return of the Soul into the same Body, from which it had been separated." Should my Soul then receive another Body, and not the same; or another Spirit, and not the same, be united to my Body, it would not be a proper Resurrection.

4. The Union being again accomplish'd (the same Body and Soul joined in the same Person,) it shall be dissolved no more; I shall be unclothed no more for ever: *When this corruptible shall put on Incorruption, &c. then shall be brought to pass* ^{1 Cor. xv.} *the Saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in Victory.* The Children of the Resurrection neither marry, nor are given in Marriage; there is no

L 3

need

arrive at, by the Addition made to the Quantity of Fluids, that pervade and fill them. These solid or vascular Parts are the *flamina vite*, and always the same; all the Change is in the Fluids, which are indeed in a perpetual Flux, some constantly perspiring or passing off by the secretory Glands; but the main Principles, the Vessels of the Body are unchangeable in their Substance thro' all the Periods of humane Life, and the Bodies of Men are so distinct, that one can't become a Part of another, nor suffer any Confusion; which being granted, the main Difficulty that attends the Doctrine of the Resurrection, vanishes.

need of Marriage, to continue the Species, or repair the Loss of Individuals, for Death is now fully conquer'd: They die not, neither *can they die*, but are as the Angels. *That Building of God, that House not made with Hands*, (that is, the Resurrection-Body, as some understand the Text) *is eternal in the Heavens*. And this is what I expect under the Notion of a Resurrection: I shall have a *Body*, the *same Body*; this in Union with the *same Spirit*; which Union will be everlasting.

A Second Meditation on the RESURRECTION.

The Properties of the Resurrection-Body.

Phil. iii. 21.

Mat. xvii. 2.

I AM to take notice of the Properties and Qualities of the Resurrection-Body: And here I am assured it shall not be such a Body, as it is at present, but far more excellent: *He shall change our vile Bodies*, says the Apostle, *and fashion them like to his own glorious Body*. And what the Glory of his Body is, we may guess from that Specimen, and faint Resemblance of it, at his Transfiguration; when *his Face*, as we are told, *did shine as the Sun*, and *his Raiment was white as the Light*. Our Bodies shall, in their Measure, be like his; *σύνμορφον*, of the same Form and Complexion, appearing with a Splendor and Brightness, resembling that of his glorified Body.

But what the Change shall be, the Apostle tells us more particularly, *Cor. xv. from ver. 35, to 45*. He brings in the Philosophick Infidel, proposing his Question, *ver. 35. with Design*, it may be, to ridicule the Doctrine; *But some will say, How are the Dead raised up, and with what Body do they come?*

He

He answers the Scoffer with a Severity, due to his Temper: *Thou Fool, &c. q. d.* Thou thinkest to baffle a Doctrine, that stands upon a sure Foundation, by an Objection, that may be answer'd from a most familiar Innocence, which every one is acquainted with. *Dost thou not know, that which thou sowest is not quicken'd, except it die?* Suppose Wheat or any other Grain be sown, it must first die, that is, be separated and dissolved in the Earth, and melted into a kind of Jelly, before it springs up, and then God gives it a Body, as he in his Wisdom and Providence sees fit; a Stalk, an Ear, &c. and to every Seed its own Body; to Wheat one Sort of Stalk and Ear, to Barley another Sort, and to each a proper Body. He adds, *ver. 42.* where he begins to apply his Simile to his present Purpose, *So is the Resurrection of the Dead, i. e.* That Case resembles this: As the Seed sown is not exactly the same with what springs up; for a Grain of Wheat, is not the same with a Stalk and Ear of Wheat, and yet it is partly the same; for every Seed has its *own and proper* Body given to it; if Wheat be sown, it grows up Wheat, not Barley or Rye; thus it is in Case of the Resurrection: *So also is the Resurrection of the Dead*, where there seems implied,

1. That our present Body is a sort of a Seed of the Resurrection-Body. Whether the Phrase concerning the Body, *v. 42. (it is sown)* refers to its Production into the World, or its being laid in the Grave, the Reference to the after-Body is manifest; it is the Seed and Matter, out of which the Resurrection-Body, as it were, springs, and from which it is formed.

2. Here is implied that the Resurrection-Body is in some respect the same with the Body that is sown (*i. e.*) the Body which we now live in, and

at Death lay in the Grave; for thus (in the Simile) God gives, says the Apostle, *to every Seed its own Body.*

3. Here is also implied, That it shall undergo a considerable Change, and consequently, not be *absolutely the same*: It is so the same, as yet to admit of a Difference: *That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that Body, that shall be*, v. 37. It is sown bare Grain of Wheat, &c. but when it springs up, it is variously changed; and thus it shall be with our Body; it shall be changed, and wherein, he tells us in Four Particulars, v. 42, 43, 44. *It is sown in Corruption, it is raised in Incorruption; it is sown in Dishonour, it is raised in Glory; it is sown in Weakness, it is raised in Power; it is sown a natural Body, it is raised a spiritual Body.*

1. *It is sown in Corruption.* It is a perishing, dying Thing, having Principles of Death and Corruption in it; therefore called by the Apostle, *a mortal Body*; and in this Chapter, *this mortal*. Its very Principles tend to Destruction; nor can it subsist without constant Sustentation, and constant Influence from an Agent and Power without it self, to preserve it from the Ruin its own Principles would infer; but it shall be raised in *Incorruption*, having no internal Principles of Death remaining: Hence 'tis said of the Children of the Resurrection, that they *cannot die* any more.

2. *It is sown in Dishonour.* 'Tis a vile Body, *Σαυα Ταταρώσεως*, a Body of Humiliation and Abasement, suited to the present lapsed State of the Soul. It not only has, what the Apostle calls, *uncomely Parts*, but is subject to Pains, Weakness, and often humbled by Deformity; we are forced at great Expence to repair it, that it may be kept tenantable; to cloath and adorn it, that it may not offend; and no sooner is it deserted by the vital

vital Principle, but it becomes a loathsome Carcase: *Let me bury my Dead, says Abraham, out of my Sight. But it is raised in Glory; hence at the Resurrection the Righteous shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and as the Stars for ever and ever. They shall shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father.* Their Body shall be a Cele-
Dan. xii. 3.
Mat. xiii. 43.

stial Body, having a Brightness and Lustre upon it, agreeable to its celestial State: Thus Christ shall transform it, when he raiseth it again, *According to the Working, whereby he is able to subdue all things under himself:* Nor is it improbable, that the glorified Spirit, which returns to reside in it, will contribute something hereunto, and communicate a Lustre to the Body. If (says one) our

“ Soul, when overjoyed, can fill our Eyes with
 “ such sprightly Flames, overspread our Counte-
 “ nances, and paint our Faces with such a serene
 “ and florid Air, what a Change will it make in
 “ our Resurrection-Body; which being incom-
 “ parable more fine and subtil than this Body,
 “ will be far more pliable to the Motions of the
 “ Soul: When therefore the happy Soul shall re-
 “ ceive the raised refined Body, ravish'd with
 “ Joy unspeakable; how will its active Joys
 “ shine thro', and overspread it with an amiable
 “ Glory ?

Scot's Chri-
stian Life,
Part I. p.
1199.

When *Moses* had been with God in the Mount, the Rays of Divine Light and Glory, that little Taste of Heaven, communicated by a short Interview with the blessed God, made his Face shine, and gave it so strong a Lustre, that the Children of *Israel* were dazzled with it, and so awed with those Beams of Majesty, that he was forc'd to veil his Face, that they might behold it, and converse with him, as at other times, *Exod. xxxiv. 30.* Some have thought this Glory con-

tinued

tinued on *Moses's* Countenance till his Death: That it continued a considerable Time, is intimated, v. 34. 35. 'tis probable for half a Year at least; that is, till he had set up the Tabernacle, and deliver'd the Laws he had receiv'd: The like we read of *Stephen*, upon a special Manifestation of God to him, his Body receiv'd some Impressions of Glory; *his Face shone as the Face of an Angel*: Now as this Transformation was, I suppose, owing in part at least, to the inward Sensation, Frame and Temper of the Mind, and not wholly to an external Impressions on the Body, it is reasonable to suppose a Spirit returning from Heaven, filled with the Light and Glory of that State, will more wonderfully transform. In short, I reckon the Glory of the Resurrection-Body will be effected by an immediate divine supernatural Power, which the triumphant joyous happy State of the Soul will contribute to.

3. It is sown in *Weakness*, that is, in a Condition of great Frailty and Infirmary; easily fatigued, soon wasted, decay'd and spent: In the present State of our Bodies, how little can we do? How little can we bear or suffer? We dwell in Houses of Clay, *whose Foundation is in the Dust, which are crushed before the Moth*. But it is raised in *Power*, full of Life, Vigour and Strength; so that it shall subsist for ever without Decay; move for ever without Weariness; fast and wake for ever without the Demands of Food and Sleep: It will have a Firmness and Vivacity in it; such as will render it a fit Instrument of a glorified Spirit; strong enough to support its Joys, and serve it in its Operations: Heaven is a State of eternal uninterrupted Religion; they rest not Night and Day, saying, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty*. And they have Bodies suited to their Employment.

How

How soon, alas ! am I now weary in (if not of) the Service of God: If I find the Spirit willing, I soon find the Flesh weak : I can't watch with my Lord and Master a few Hours, but this Body begins to flag, to feel its Burden, and succumb under it ; I am forc'd to suspend Operation, demand a Pause, submit to a sort of Death to recruit its Strength, and restore its exhausted Spirits: But the Resurrection-Body will have no Incumbrance of this Kind ; it will languish no more ; be weary no more, but be raised *in Power*, with Life and Activity ; so as never to desert the Soul in its most intense and vigorous Exercises.

4. It is sown a *Natural* or Animal Body (*Σωμα ψυχικόν*) i. e. adapted to this lower sensitive animal Life ; sustain'd by Meat, Drink and Sleep, and constantly depending thereon ; a Body with Affections, and Passions, Appetites and Inclinations, gross and sensual, and of the same kind with those of the Brutes ; on which account also it may be called a *vile Body*, or a Body of humbling: For how low do we often stoop to gratify the Appetites of the Body, and in Compliance with its Cravings? How wilt thou blush, oh my Soul ! How wilt thou be ashamed, when out of the Body, among the pure Intelligences of the other State, to think to what mean Drudgery thou once submittedst, when in the Body? *serving divers Lusts and Pleasures*. How thou laidst aside thy Crown, forgottest the original Dignity of thy Nature ; wast enslaved to Sense and Appetite, and transported with the Entertainments of a Brute!

But how happy the Change that shall be made, when it is rais'd a *spiritual Body*? refined from its Grossness ; when it shall have wholly laid aside the Luggage, and Burden of the Flesh ; shall need no more the Recruits of Food and Sleep ; crave

no

no more the Pleasures of Sense, nor delude thee any more with those muddy Delights, which the Senses are the Channels and Instruments of: And then its Constitution and Frame will be spiritual, attempered and fitted to the divine, pure, spiritual Operations of the Soul; all its Members will be Instruments of Righteousness: Thou wilt no longer, oh my Soul! complain of the Law of the Members warring against the Law of the Mind: The Body thou shalt then receive will be in perfect Subjection to the Soul: It will no more pini-
on, divert and tempt it, as it used to do, being improved into a sort of an Angelick Body: Not but, probably, we shall have more of Body than the Angels; but 'tis likely, our Bodies will then resemble their Vehicles, in Pureness, Fineness and Activity: Hence the ancient Hebrews stiled the Resurrection-Body, *the Angelical Cloathing of the Soul*; and *Tertullian* calls it, *Carnem angelificatam, angeliz'd Flesh*: Nor is this any Objection against the Resurrection-Body, it being the same with this Body (that which is rais'd with that which is sown;) for as Philosophers agree, there is really no specifick essential Difference in Matter, the grossest Body in the World being capable of Refinement to the Subtility of the purest Æther; so that our Body may be the same, notwithstanding so great a Change as to its Quality, in order to fit it ^a for the State where it is. And this, oh my Soul!

^a *Pamphilus* apologizing for *Origen*, produceth several Passages of his Works, to shew he believed the Resurrection of the Flesh, or of the same Body, and among the rest what followeth:—"As we retain, says he, the same Body from our Infancy to old Age, though the Characters may seem to be much alter'd, so we ought to understand that the very same Species will remain in the Life to come, tho' chang'd

Soul! will be the Condition of the Resurrection-body, this, or something like this: The Trumpet shall sound; the Dead shall be rais'd, and we shall be *changed*; changed with these and the like Advantages and Improvements: *This Corruptible shall put on Incorruption*; be rais'd in Glory, in Power, and truly a spiritual Body. And with what Pleasure shouldst thou think of this blessed Day? With what solicitous Care shouldst thou prepare for it? Lord, grant me a Part in the better Resurrection!

A Third Meditation on the same Subject.

BUT it is certain, that I shall have my Body ^{Proofs of a Resurrection} again in this improved State? Things of great Moment, and that import a great deal of Comfort, had need be well establish'd: Let me therefore enquire, upon what Foundation my Faith herein stands; tho' before I proceed, I shall premise two Observations.

1. That this Doctrine belongs not to the Articles of natural Religion: The Philosophers of old, it is known, represented the Christian Notion of the Resurrection, as impossible and ridiculous.

“chang'd very much for the better; for it is necessary, that
 “the Soul which dwells in corporeal Places, should have such
 “a Body, as is suited to those Places, where it lives; and as
 “if we were to live in the Sea, our Bodies would doubt-
 “less be so order'd and constituted, as is proper for such an
 “Habitation (as the Bodies of those Creatures are, which
 “there inhabit); so now, since we are design'd for a Cele-
 “stial Habitation, it follows, that the Qualities of our Bo-
 “dies shall be suited to the Glory of those Places; not-
 “withstanding this, the former Species will not be destroyed,
 “tho' it be made more glorious.”

Enarrat.
in Pl. xcviil.

culous. *Augustin* tells us, there was nothing in the whole Christian Religion so vehemently opposed by them, as the Resurrection of the Flesh. Of the Immortality of the Soul, says he, they have discoursed at large, and many of them assert it; but when they come to speak of the Resurrection, they not only contradict it, but maintain, *it is impossible*. And this was so general among them, that *Tertullian* informs us, there was not one Set of the Philosophers, but what denied it.

Nat. Hist.
Lib. 3. c. 7.

They did, says another, *πᾶντι ἀντιστάμενος τῷ νόμῳ*, with all manner of Opposition contend against it. *Pliny* places it amongst the Number of Impossibilities, viz. *Revocare defunctos*, and boldly affirms, it is what God neither *will do*, nor *can do*. *Celsus* calls the Doctrine *abominable*, and insults the Christians as Madmen, for believing it. *Julian* the Apostate attacks them with his usual Raillery on this Head. *Origen* says, that it was the common Subject of Laughter among the Pagans; and I find, that when the great *Apostle*, preaching at *Athens*, spoke of the Resurrection of the Dead, the *Epicureans* that heard him, *mocked*. And in the same Strain our modern *Deists* talk of it. “It is contrary, say they, to all the Principles of Philosophy, that a Body which has submitted to natural Corruption, should resume its ancient Form.” So that it is plain, there is no learning this Doctrine in the School of Nature, or arguing it out by Principles of Reason: Natural Reason can here do me no Service; it says nothing of it, unless in a way of Objection and Cavil; and yet,

Acts xvii.
42.

2dly, I find this Doctrine has always been received in the Church of God, and admitted as an Article of their Faith, under every Dispensation

sation of Religion. The *Patriarchs* v seem to have had some Knowledge of it: Our Saviour includes it in the Covenant made with them, *Exod.* iii. 6. compared with *Matth.* xxii. 32. And one would think, *Abraham* was not ignorant of it, when he so readily complied with God's Command, to sacrifice his Son, especially after what the Apostle has added, that he *accounted that God* Heb.xi.19. *was able to raise him from the Dead.* *Job*, who lived in the Patriarchal Age, profess'd his Faith on this Head with great Assurance, in those Words, (as many interpret) *I know that my Redeemer liveth, &c.* Job xix. I am sensible the Text is very 25, &c. ambiguous, and has a different Turn given to it; but if the Doctrine was then revealed, it is not unreasonable to suppose this good Man refers to it, when he speaks of his Redeemer, standing upon the Earth, and that in the latter Days, and of seeing him with his Eyes: *In my Flesh*, says he, *shall I see God, whom I shall behold, and not another, (or not a stranger Eye)* intimating that he should have the *same Body* restored with the *same Eyes*. The vulgar Latin renders it, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that at the last Day I am to rise from the Earth, and shall again be covered with my Skin, and in my Flesh I shall see God.*

As for the Jewish Church, it was certainly an Article with them, That God would raise the Dead. *Ezekiel* grounds his Parable, concerning the

v Dr. *Hody* has taken a great deal of Pains, to prove, that the Resurrection is an ancient universal Doctrine, derived down from *Noah*, and grounded on the more early Revelation made to the Antediluvian Patriarchs; and that there were Footsteps of it among the Heathens, (though it is manifest they were far from believing the Scripture Notion of it.)

Ezekiel
xxxvii.

2 Mac. vii.
9.

Ver. 11.

Ver. 14.

Prov. vii.
18.

Ezek.
xxxvii. 7.

Deuter.
xxxii. 39.

the Resurrection of the dead and dry Bones, upon the Doctrine of a general Resurrection; which must suppose it known and current among them. That it was so in the Time of the *Maccabees*, appears evidently from their History: Hence we find the Seven Brethren, when put to Death by the Tyrant *Antiochus*, comforting themselves with the Hope of it. *Thou, like a Fury*, says one of them, when ready to expire, *takest us out of this present Life, but the King of the World will raise us up, who have died for his Laws, unto everlasting Life*. Another, when he came to suffer, stretched out his Hands, and said, *These I had from Heaven, and for his Laws I despise them; and from him I hope to receive them again*. The fourth at his Death cried out, *It is good, being put to Death by Men, to look for Hope from God, to be raised up again by him; adding, as for thee (meaning the King) thou shalt have no Resurrection to Life*.^d And when the last came to suffer, the Mother exhorted to Constancy, from the Consideration of a happy Resurrection, encouraging him with the Hope and Assurance thereof, as *Josephus* testifies: To which Purpose she applied several Texts of Scripture, as, *Wisdom is the Tree of Life to them that lay hold of her. Can these dry Bones live?* Not omitting the Saying of *Moses* in his Song, often urged by the *Jews* as a Proof of the Resurrection, *I kill, and I make alive*. Thus, as the Apostle says, (referring, probably, to this very Instance) they wou'd not accept of Deliverance,

* If any should suppose the Historian is the Author of these Speeches, or at least gave a Turn to them (as it must be granted is common in Cases of the like Nature:) I answer, we have no certain Proof of that; however, it shews what the

rance, that they might obtain a better Resurrection.

Nor did they, in their most degenerate State, part with this Article, (excepting a few that they counted Hereticks) as appears from the Apostle Paul's Apology before Felix: *I have hope to* Acts xxiv. *wards God, as they themselves also allow, that* 15. *there shall be a Resurrection, both of the Just and Unjust.* And how readily does Martha profess her Faith herein, when Christ told her, her Brother should rise again? *I know,* says she, *he shall* John xi. *rise again at the Resurrection of the last Day;* plain- 24. *ly implying, that this was the common Faith of the Jews which she had been train'd up in.* The modern Jews, notwithstanding their Apostacy in other Instances, still agree with their Forefathers in this Point: In their *Sepher Akkerim*, or Book of Fundamentals, (which is their present Creed, reduced into this Method and Order by *Maimonides* about the End of the eleventh Century,) the thirteenth Article runs thus: "I believe with a perfect Faith, that the Dead shall be restored to Life, when it shall seem fit to God the Creator." And their Story of the *Devolution of the Dead*, or rowling of the Cavern *y* is a sufficient
M Evidence

y The *Chaldee Paraphrase* on the *Canticles*, Chap. viii. 5. says, "When the Dead shall revive, it shall come to pass *Hody*, p. 78: "that the Mount of Olives shall be cleft, and all the Dead "of *Israel* shall come out from thence, and the Just too, "that died in the Captivity, shall come by the *Way of the* "Caverns under the Earth, and shall come forth out of the "Mount of Olives." Which Fiction of theirs (as ridiculous as it is) shews that they believed the Resurrection of the Body, and of the same Body: They give it for a Reason why *Jacob* and *Joseph*, who died in *Egypt*, were carried into *Canaan* to be buried there, *viz.* that they might be freed

Evidence they believed a Resurrection; it being an Opinion and Matter of Belief with them, that the *Jews*, who are buried out of *Judea*, shall at the Resurrection *pass through the Caverns of the Earth as far as Judea*, and there rise again.

What the Faith of Christians is, and has been, touching this Article, needs no Enquiry; they have transcribed it out of the Bible into all their Creeds, and other Writings, where it stands express'd in the fullest Terms. *Clement*, in his second Epistle to the *Corinthians*, admonisheth them, that as in the Flesh they were called, so in the Flesh they shou'd come, and in the Flesh receive a Reward. *Polycarp* thanks God, when he was bound to the Stake, that he was to suffer Martyrdom, and to partake of the Cup of Christ, in order to the Resurrection of Soul and Body to everlasting Life. And to the same Purpose *Justin Martyr*, *Tatian*, *Irenæus*, *Athenagoras*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Tertullian*, and most of the Apologists and Fathers. In the Epistle of the Churches of *Vienne* and *Lyons*, wrote about the Year 177, to the Churches of *Asia* and *Phrygia* (extant in *Eusebius*) they complain, " That
 " their Persecutors would not suffer the Bodies
 of

freed from the Trouble of the Caverns. And hence, to this Day, the richest *Jews*, in what Part soever they die, have their Bones carried to the Holy Land. *Sandy* says in his Travels, that whole Barks full of Bones are wont to arrive at *Joppa*, to be interr'd at *Jerusalem*. And *Thevenot* tells us, that the *Jews*, who live at *Jerusalem*, give a Chequer a Day for Permission to bury their Dead in the Valley of *Jebosaphat*, that they may be the sooner dispatched in the Day of Judgment; which they believe will be held in that Place: And the Reason why they expect more Dispatch, is because those who live at a greater Distance must pass through the Caverns, which will require Time.

*Euseb. l. 14.
c. 15.*

*Travels,
Part I. p. 184*

“ of the Martyrs to be buried, but threw them
 “ to Dogs to be devoured, and burnt them to
 “ Ashes, and then cast their Ashes into the River,
 “ and this, say they, they did, as if they would
 “ overcome God, and hinder their Resurrection,
 “ through Belief of which they despised the great-
 “ est Torments.” So that ’tis evident this Doc-
 trine, however ridicul’d by those without the
 Church, was always heartily embraced by the
 Members of it; Patriarchs, Jews, Christians.
 And I am now to see upon what Foundation it
 stands, upon what Principles they received it,
 for the assisting and strengthening my own Faith.
 And 1st, I have very express and clear Testimo-
 nies of Scripture to found my Faith upon; which
 I am the more obliged to take Notice of, because
 as this is a Doctrine entirely depending on Reve-
 lation, so I find the *Sadducees* Heresy, touching
 the Resurrection, imputed by Christ himself to
 their Ignorance of Scripture, *Ye err, saith he, Matt. xxii.*
not knowing the Scripture, nor the Power of God. ^{29.}
 The *Power of God*, that he is able to do it;
 and the *Scripture*, that he has declared he will
 do it. What Intimations we have of it in the
Old Testament, has been already observed: It
 was contain’d in God’s Covenant with *Abraham* *Exod. iii.*
 and the Patriarchs. *Job* is suppos’d to refer to ⁶
 it, and the Prophet *Ezekiel*, in his Parable. So ^{Job xix.}
 the Psalmist, *When I awake I shall be satisfied* ^{25.}
with thy Likeness. *Daniel* mentions it in express ^{Ezekiel,}
 Terms, *And many of them that sleep in the Dust* ^{xxxvii.}
shall awake, some to everlasting Life, some to Shame ^{Pf. xvii.}
and everlasting Contempt. ^{ult.} In the *New Testament* ^{Dan. xii. 2.}
 the Evidence is yet stronger and clearer. Our ^{Matth. x.}
 Saviour speaks of destroying *both Body and Soul* ^{28.}
in Hell, of the *whole Body being cast into Hell*;
 which supposeth a Resurrection: He assures us,

John v. 28. *the Hour is coming in the which all that are in the Graves shall hear his Voice, and shall come forth; they that have done Good unto the Resurrection of Life, &c. The Dead in Christ shall rise, (first)*
 1 Theff. iv. 6. *says the Apostle, He shall change our vile Body.*
 Phil. iii. 21. *And again, The Dead shall be raised, incorruptible:* Indeed the whole Chapter is employed in the same Argument, in asserting and vindicating a future Resurrection. And, to mention but one Scripture more, in the Vision *John* had of this great Scene, it is said, *The Sea gave up the Dead which were in it, and Death and Hell delivered up the Dead that were in them.*
 Rev. xx. 13.

And thus I have a sure Word of Prophecy to rely on: The *Bible* is the Source of this Doctrine; there I am to seek it, and there I find it: God, who best knows his own Purpose and Power, what he can do, and what he will do, has told me he will do this. May I resign to his Authority! If any say, How can these things be? Can these dead and *dry Bones live*? I may answer, with the Prophet, *Lord, thou knowest*; thou knowest they can, and hast said they shall. Lord, I acquiesce in thy Word, and wait for the Accomplishment of it!

A Fourth Meditation on the RESURRECTION.

NOR have I only the Testimony of Scripture in this Case, which in so many Words asserts there shall be a Resurrection of the Body; but several Arguments there suggested, which confirm the same Point: And these I shall briefly consider, and therefore add,

2dly,

2dly, The Resurrection of Christ proves the Resurrection of Believers; is a Pledge and Earnest of it: This the Apostle warrants me to conclude, *If there be no Resurrection of the Dead,* ^{1 Cor. xv.} *then is not Christ risen.* And again, *If the Dead* ^{13.} *rise not, then is Christ not raised.* He adds, *But* ^{Ver. 16.} *now is Christ risen from the Dead, and become the* ^{Ver. 20.} *First-Fruits of them that slept;* where he refers to the Law concerning the *First-Fruits*. When ^{Lev. xxix.} *the Harvest was ripe,* they were to bring a *Sheaf* ^{9, 10, 11.} *of the First-Fruits for a Wave-Offering,* with a *Burnt-Offering* at the same time: Nor might they eat *Bread, parched Corn, or green Ears,* till they had made their *Offering of First-Fruits*. But having done this as the Law required, the whole Mass and Substance of the Harvest was hallowed; this Offering of First-Fruits being instead of all the rest, to which that alludes, *If* ^{Rom. xi.} *the First-Fruits be holy, the Lump is holy:* Now ^{16.} with Reference hereto the Apostle calls the Resurrection of Christ the *First-Fruits*; it having, as it were, hallowed the dead Bodies of the Saints, and consecrated them to a new Life. He rose not only as *first* in Order, but his Resurrection was a Representation and Figure of ours; shewed not only that it *might* be, but that it *should* be: He rose as our Head; when his natural Body was raised, the mystical was raised also. “By his Resurrection he dissolved the Tyranny of Death, saith one of the “Fathers, and raised the whole World, or “Church;” which is no more than what the Apostle intimates in these Words, *He hath raised* ^{Eph. ii. 6.} *us up together with Christ:* He rose for us, went to Heaven for us, as our *Forerunner*. ^{Heb. vi. 20.}

So that according to the *Apostle's Reasoning,* the future Resurrection of Believers is as certain as the

past Resurrection of Christ: *If Christ be risen, we shall rise*: The former of these is History, and Fact; and I have the Authority of an inspired Apostle thence to infer the other. And oh! my Soul, what Ground of Faith, and even Triumph, hast thou in this great Event, the Resurrection of thy Redeemer! Behold here a Type, an assuring Pledge of thy own! The same Power that raised up him, will raise up thee! Thy Saviour was dead, laid in a Grave, lock'd up in a Sepulchre, the Door sealed and guarded, Men and Devils conspiring to detain him a Prisoner there: But behold, he broke the Bands of Death, forced his Way through all Opposition, and triumphed over the Grave! And thus shalt thou do, in thy Time and Order:

Col. i. 18. *Christ the First-fruits, and afterwards they that are Christ's. He is the First-born from the Dead. And if he be the first, it implies that others shall follow; his Brethren shall be born after him: And how securely mayst thou depend on the divine Power for the Accomplishment of thy Hopes; when it is the Power of thy Redeemer and Head,*
 Rev. i. 18. *who was himself dead, and is alive; and liveth for ever; and not only so, but hath the Keys of Death and Hades. He is Lord over the invisible World, over the Grave; can, and will, command forth its Prisoners: Yea, the Thing is already, virtually done, when he himself was rais'd up: So that if I believe that Jesus died and rose again, I may conclude, that them also that sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.*
 1 Theff. iv. 14.

3^{dly}, It is some Confirmation of my Faith, that my great Lord and Master, the First-born from the Dead, hath given Instances of his Power, in the actual Resurrection of some of his Followers: We have several Examples of the Dead restored to

to Life again, by the Power of God, which may be looked upon as a Specimen of the General Resurrection: Such as the Widow of Sarepta's Son, ^{1 Kings xvii. 22.} the Shunamite's Son. ^{2 King. iv. 34, 35.} Jairus's Daughter, the Son of the Widow of Naim. Lazarus, and Tabitha. ^{Mark v. 22.} But as these Persons rose only to a temporary Life, as I suppose, and to die again, they may not be thought Instances pertinent to our Purpose, and therefore I shall not further insist upon them; (tho' ^{Luke vii. 11.} they sufficiently demonstrate that the divine Power can effect the Re-union of Soul and Body, and ^{John xi. 39.} seem to intimate God designs the Dead shall have ^{Acts ix. 40.} their Bodies again, and live in them again.) But that which I wou'd chiefly take Notice of, is, the Resurrection of those Saints at the time of Christ's Resurrection, mentioned *Matt. xxvii. 52, 53.* It is said, *The Graves were opened, and many Bodies of the Saints which slept arose, and came out of the Graves, after his Resurrection, and went into the holy City, and appeared unto many.* Who they were that rose, the Curiosity of some has disputed, though to little Purpose. It has also been a Question, whether they died again, or ascended with Christ? But leaving these Speculations, I shall only observe, that it is certain some rose, rose with the same Bodies, and therefore it is said, *the Graves were opened, and they came forth;* which was after and upon the Resurrection of Christ. Which I take to be an Illustration of the Apostle's Doctrine before-mentioned: Christ rose as the First-fruits; now, as a Token of the full Harvest, in due time, behold some of his Saints, his redeemed Ones, presently follow him: He had conquered Death, and he would have a few of his Servants and Members, as a Pledge of what he designed for all the rest, share with him in the Triumph. And oh! my Soul, here's further Ground of Assurance: Thou seest not only Christ

the First-born, but others of thy Brethren are risen; thou hast therein, as in a Figure, thy own Resurrection: Dismiss, therefore, thy Fears, thy Jealousies; let thy *Flesh rest in Hope*, follow them that are gone before in Faith and Patience, and with them thou shalt inherit the Promises.

Mat. xxii.
32, 33.

4thly, I am allowed to argue a Resurrection, from God's Covenant with Believers, and the Relation they stand in to him. God is their God, *therefore* they shall rise; which is an Inference my Saviour has taught me to make. The Covenant extends to the Person, and secures the Happiness of the whole Man: If I can upon sure Grounds claim an Interest in God, as my Covenant-God, I may expect from thence a *complete* Happiness; that my Body shall not perish, but that, in my entire Person, I shall see and enjoy God; partake of the Blessedness of another State. Further, Believers are Members of Christ: They are under his Headship, committed to his Trust; and he has told us, that it is *the Father's Will, that of all he has given him, he should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last Day*. Not only no Person, but no Part of the Person; and therefore he particularly takes Notice, that that Part, which seems now to be lost, really is not; *he will raise it up again*.

John vi.
39.

Rom. viii.
23.

Further, Believers are Sons of God, and as such are Children of the Resurrection: Hence the *Apostle* makes their Adoption include in it the Resurrection of the Body, *Waiting for the Adoption, to wit, the Redemption of our Body*. The Sons of God shall have their full Inheritance, all the Felicity designed them: Nor indeed do they look like Sons, whilst so dear a Part of them, as their own Body, lies rotting in the Grave; therefore they are said to be *waiting for the Adoption*,
having

having not yet received the full Privilege, Dignity and Glory of their State: In short, since they are Sons, they shall rise again, their Bodies be redeemed.

Once more, they are *Temples of the Holy Ghost*; ^{1 Cor. vi.} their Bodies are so, and can we imagine he will ^{19.} suffer his Temple to be finally demolished! The Apostle assures us he will not, *If the Spirit of* ^{Rom. viii.} *him, says he, that raised up Jesus, from the Dead* ^{11.} *dwell in you he will quicken your mortal Bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* Whereupon the Spirit is said to be the Earnest of the Inheritance, until the Redemption of the purchased Possession. O my Soul! secure thy Relation to God, as his Covenant-Servant, his Son, the Temple of the Holy Ghost; receive and cherish the Spirit of Grace; thou hast therein an Assurance of a Resurrection to Life and Glory.

5thly, The Justice and Equity of God's Government affords a probable Argument for the Resurrection of the Body: Not that the Body is properly *guilty or rewardable*; the Soul is the only intelligent, vital, active Principle; but it acts in and by the Body, and not without it: The Soul designs, the Body executes; the Heart is the Fountain of Good or Evil, but the Tongue expresseth it, and the several Senses variously minister thereto: Our Members are, at least, *In-* ^{Rom. vi.} *struments of Righteousness or Unrighteousness.* ^{Ac. 13.} Accordingly, we are commanded to *yield them* ^{1 Cor. vi.} *to God, and to glorify God in our Body, as* ^{20.} *well as in our Spirit.* In short, *Man*, as consisting of Body and Soul, is the Subject of divine Government; our Actions, either of Obedience or Disobedience, are the Actions of the *Person*, not of the Soul only; consequently the Retribution shall be received in the entire Person

son: God, that saw fit here to govern us in the Body, will hereafter judge us in the Body, 2 Cor. v. 10. which one of the Ancients thought to carry so much Equity^d in it, that he scrupled not to pronounce, *Si non Resurrectio, neque Deus neque Providentia*: "If we deny a Resurrection, we
 " may as well deny both God and Providence."
 " The Body, says *Tertullian*, is the Soul's Sister
 " and Co-heir, and therefore is to share with it in
 " its Estate.

6thly, It is of some Weight in the present Argument, that I find good Men in Scripture referring to the Resurrection, as the State of their consummate Felicity, groaning after it, and longing for it: *I press forward*, says the Apostle, *towards the Mark of the high Calling, if by any Means I might attain to the Resurrection of the Dead*. And to the same Purpose, 2 Cor. v. 2. *For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our House, which is from Heaven*: He adds, in the fifth Verse, *He that hath wrought us for the self-same Thing is God; who also hath given us the Earnest of the Spirit*. And again, Rom. viii. 23. *We, who have the first Fruits of the Spirit, groan within our selves, waiting for the Adoption, to wit, the Redemption of our Bodies*. In both which Texts these *Suspiria Sanctorum*, these ardent Breathings of the Saints, are ascribed to the holy Spirit: And is it to be imagined, that God will baffle the Desires

^d Is it not absurd, says *Origen*, that the Body, which bears the Scars of Wounds received for Christ's Sake, and which, as well as the Soul, endured cruel Torments in Persecutions, and suffered the Punishments of Bonds, Imprisonments, &c. should be defrauded of the Rewards due to it for so great Sufferings? Does it not seem contrary to all Reason, that the Soul, which did not suffer *alone*, should be rewarded *alone*, and its Vessel the Body, which served it with so great Labour, should obtain no Reward?

fires he hath excited in us, and disappoint the Expectations his Spirit hath given us?

7thly and lastly, the Certainty of the Resurrection may be argued from that Salvation Christ is the Author of, the great Redemption he came to accomplish; which no doubt, extends to all the Evils Sin has brought us under: He shall *save his People from their Sins*, Matt. i. 21. from Sin, and from all the Effects and Fruits thereof; from the first grand Apostacy, with all its Penalties; from every Curse, being *made a Curse for us*. Now since Death was the very Evil and Curse *most directly* threatned as the Punishment of Man's Disobedience, Gen. iii. 19. it must be included in the Redemption and Deliverance we have by Christ; and consequently, I may with great Assurance expect from him a Resurrection: So long as I remain in a State of Separation, so long I am in a State of Death, whatever my Enjoyment and Happiness may be in other Respects: For what is Death, but the Separation of Soul and Body? So long as I want this Body, I have a Mark of God's Displeasure upon me, and of my Apostacy; I am bearing the Punishment of my Sin: Nor has my Redeemer finished his Office, and done the Part of a perfect Saviour, till herein he has delivered me.

O my Soul! commit thy self into his Hands; *he is able to save to the uttermost*, finally and fully: *Though after thy Skin Worms destroy this Body*, he'll rescue thee from the Power of the Grave, and shew thee the Path of Life: He must reign till *he has put down all Enemies under his Feet*; all his Enemies, and thy Enemies, the Enemies of thy Salvation; and then Death it self, *the last Enemy*, shall be destroyed, *be swallowed up in Victory*: Thou must submit to the Stroke of it, yield a while to this
this

this Conqueror and Tyrant; but *Thanks be to God, who will give thee the Victory through the Lord Jesus Christ.*

A Fifth Meditation upon the same Subject.

Notwithstanding such full and clear Evidence for this Doctrine, I am sensible it is not without its Difficulties; it has been, and still is fiercely attack'd, and the Foundations of it struck at, by the Adversaries of the Christian Faith: The Apostle met with some in his Time, that thought it *incredible that God should raise the Dead*; and many, in every Age since, have been cavilling against it, and still continue to do so: Now as I wou'd profess nothing as an Article of Faith, before I have tried it, nothing that cannot bear the severest Examination; I shall here consider what is alledged by Objectors. And,

Vid. Dr.
Nichols's
Conference
with a Theist.

(1.) Some pretend it is *impossible*: This was the Cry of the antient Philosophers, as before hinted, and is taken up by the Deists of our own Age: They tell us, that it is not consistent with the known Rules of Philosophy, for the Body to rise: And further to incumber the Doctrine, they represent, “ that the Particles of the dissolved Body are dispers'd through the World, evaporated into Air; and which is more, the same Matter has, in Succession of Time, compos'd, it may be, half a Score Bodies: The Herbage which grows from the Corruption of human Bodies, is turn'd into the Nourishment of Animals, and these Animals become the Food of other Men; sometimes Animals devour human
“ Flesh,

“Flesh, and are themselves afterwards Man’s
“Food; as in the Instance of the *Roman*, who
“fed his Fish with the Bodies of his Slaves, that
“he threw into his Ponds: Now here the Sub-
“stance of one Man’s Body becomes the Sub-
“stance of another; and consequently each can-
“not have their own, and the same Body. And
“the Objection they think yet stronger in the
“Case of *Cannibals*, who live on the Bodies of
“Men.” This is the Objection in its utmost
Strength, and yet how little is there in it that need
stagger the Faith of a Christian, or that can ren-
der this Doctrine unworthy of his Belief? It
might be enough to oppose to such Cavillers,
what our Saviour said to the Sadducees, *Mat. xxii.*
29. They err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the
Power of God: But I shall speak a little more
distinctly to it. And,

1st, Let me observe, that all the Matter, which
at any time composed the human Body, is still in
Being: *Philosophy* will not allow, that the least
Particle of Matter is annihilated; there’s the same
Matter now in the World, that there was at the
first Creation; the Particles that constituted
Adam’s Body, after all imaginable Transmutations
and Changes, *still exist*, they still are somewhere.

2dly, Every Particle of Matter is under the
Eye of God, within the Compass of his Know-
ledge; he numbers the *Hairs of our Head*; he
tells the *Number of the Stars*, and calls them by
their Names, *Psal. cxlvii. 4.* He measures the
Waters in the Hollow of his Hand, metes out the
Heavens with a Span, and comprehends the *Dust of*
the Earth in a Measure, *Isai. xl. 12.* And why
not the Dust of our Body also? Shall we not sup-
pose this within his *Ken*, and that however disper-
sed, he knows where to find the Particles thereof?

3dly,

3dly, If the Matter of our Bodies still exist, and all the Particles thereof be under the divine Eye, is it any Difficulty to suppose he can collect them and unite them? (*i. e.* so much of them as is necessary to this Purpose.) They that deny this, must either maintain it implies a Contradiction, (which the most resolute Objector will never be able to shew;) or deny that God is Almighty; which is indeed to ungod him.

4thly, As an Illustration of this Doctrine, and a Help to my Faith, I wou'd observe that God has displayed his Power in a higher Instance, and in a Work of greater Difficulty than the Resurrection: I mean, *in Creation*. He that believes the *Heavens were formed by the Word of the Lord, and all the Host of them by the Breath of his Mouth*; that he only spake, and it was done; commanded, and it stood fast; can never question the Possibility of the Resurrection; *i. e.* that God can effect it if he please. Nor is there any Force or Sense in the Objection, that we cannot understand how it should be, that the same Body, after all these [supposed] Changes, should rise again; for is not God wiser than we? and cannot he do exceeding abundantly above all that we can think, or conceive? I might ask the Objector, whether he can understand how *Something was made out of Nothing*? how a Rib out of *Adam's Side* made a Woman? how the Dust of the Ground was at first formed into the Body of a Man, into Flesh, Skin, Hair, Bones, Sinews, Veins, Arteries, &c.? Suppose one of us had been created just before the Matter of the World, and had beheld that *Chaos* mentioned, *Gen. i. 2. without Form, and void*; would it not have been as incredible, that from hence should have proceeded such a Number of Creatures, in different Shapes, with Variety of Organs,

Eph. iii.
20.

gans, Voices, Colours, &c. as incredible, I say, as any thing in the Doctrine of the Resurrection? So that whatever others do, the Christian needs make no Difficulty of this Doctrine: Who can question the Power of that God, who by his sovereign Fiat and Word made a World; and particularly the curious Machine of this human Body out of the Dust?

5thly, As to the Objection that relates to the *Cannibals*, &c. viz. "that the Substance of one Man's Body becomes the Substance of another," the same Answer is sufficient; no Particle of Matter is lost, whatever Changes it passes through: And God can make the Separation, command back, and summon together what is necessary, in order to accomplish his own Promise. Besides, (according to the Observation of *Sanctorius*) not above a fiftieth Part of what we eat turns to Nourishment, (to which the Liquids also contribute a considerable Share,) and can be thought to incorporate with us: So that there are above forty-nine Parts remaining, in the Case here objected, to be the Matter of the Resurrection-Body. But I need not puzzle myself with Intricacies of this Nature: I may here, with Safety and Honour too, retreat to the divine Power. God can raise and restore the Body, unite the scattered Dust, and he has said he will; and there I rest.

(2.) Some object against the Resurrection of the same Body, with the same Members and Parts, *that there will be no Use of these Members in the other State*: We shall, say they, have no Occasion for such a Body as we have now, why therefore should we expect it? But this is no sufficient Argument against our Doctrine; for though the Members and Faculties of the Resurrection-Body, shall

Dr. Scot.
Phil. iii.
21.

shall not serve for the same Purposes as at present, it doth not follow, it shall be raised without them : “ Our Saviour’s Body, after his Resurrection, had no Need of Nourishment ; yet
“ it was raised again with its natural Instruments of eating and drinking ; which he once
“ actually used, to assure his Disciples of the
“ Reality of his Resurrection ; and though these
“ Parts are now useless to him, as to that particular Animal Operation, his Soul may use
“ them for other Purposes, to us unknown,
“ and peculiar to his glorified State.” My Author adds, “ Since Christ’s glorious Resurrection-Body is represented as the Pattern
“ of ours, we may infer, that ours shall rise, as
“ his did, with all the Parts of an human Body,” though I presume it is not necessary to assert thus much ; the Doctrine of the Resurrection, and Identity, or Sameness of the Body, doth not require it : The Members and Senses of our present Body are, no question, peculiarly adapted to our present State, both of Operation and Enjoyment : What Change there may be in this respect hereafter, I know not, *i. e.* whether we shall have all the same Parts and Members, and in the same Form : This I leave among the Secrets of the other World, not revealed in this ; the Body may be the same essentially, and in Substance, notwithstanding any Alteration in this and other Instances.

3dly, ’Tis objected, That the Body is so great a Clog and Burden to the Soul, that it can be no Advantage to us ; no Part of our Happiness to receive it again, and therefore we have no Reason to desire it. The *Philosophers*, especially the *Platonists*, us’d to represent it, in their Discourses, as the Prison, the Sepulchre of the Mind, and accordingly

cordingly placed the chief Felicity of Man in a perfect Freedom from all Body, and all Commerce with Matter : But this Objection is wholly grounded upon a Mistake, as if the Resurrection-Body should be like this present vile Body of i Cor. xv: ours; whereas it shall be changed, as the Apo- 35, &c. stle assures us, It shall be rais'd *in Power*, rais'd *a Spiritual Body* : It was once a Prison, it shall be turned into a Palace; a glorious Building of God ! Such as the Owner will return to, not only without Reluctancy, but with Pleasure and Triumph. But,

4thly, The Apostle's Authority is pretended against the Resurrection *of the same Body*. *Thou* Ver. 37: *sowest not*, says he, *that Body that shall be* : God 38: *giveth it a Body as pleaseth him*. I answer, the Apostle speaks there directly of the Grain of Corn, sown in the Earth, and his Design is to illustrate the Doctrine of the Resurrection thereby, and to intimate, as the Grain of Corn, after 'tis dissolv'd in the Ground, becomes by the Power of God a Stalk, Ear, &c. so by the Power of God also, this Body of ours shall be restor'd, tho' changed and improved as there expressed; God gives to every Seed *its own Body*, tho' 'tis not bare Grain (the individual Seed as it was) that springs up : Our Bodies will be the *same*; not absolutely the same; for Flesh and Blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God : They shall be changed; God will give us a Body *as pleaseth him*, as is intimated (in the *Simile*) of the Grain of Corn; a Body so improved and refined, as God shall appoint; but yet to every Seed *its own Body* : In short, as the Saints, that are alive at his coming shall be chang'd, but not lose their Bodies, or have other Bodies substituted in their Room; so we have reason to think it shall be with the dead

N Saints;

Saints; both shall have their own Bodies, but changed Bodies. This the Apostle signified, 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. *Behold I shew you a Mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed in a Moment, in the twinkling of an Eye, at the last Trump; for the Trumpet shall sound, and the Dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed; both the Living and the Dead shall have Bodies, their own Bodies; tho' both shall be changed and made incorruptible, that they may inherit the Kingdom of God.*

And thus, oh my Soul! thou seest thy Way clear; and the Doctrine freed, in a good Measure, from all Difficulties; so that nothing remains, that need in the least disturb thy Mind, or discourage thy Faith: Say not, can these dry and dead Bones live? Thy God knows they can, and has declared they shall: Dismiss therefore all Suspicions; don't stagger at the Promise through Unbelief; but being strong in Faith give Glory to God. *Lord, I believe, help thou my Unbelief!*

A Sixth Meditation on the RESUR- RECTION.

Application. And now, O my Soul, improve this important Doctrine for thy Instruction, Comfort and Quickening.

The INSTRUCTION.

AND (1.) I can't but infer the Excellency of the Christian Religion, and the exceeding Advantage and Happiness of those that are called to the Profession of it. The Heathen World knew but little of a future State, of the Soul's Subsistence

sistence after this Life, and nothing of a Resurrection; nor indeed was it ever fully reveal'd, till the glorious Author of it *brought Life and Immortality to light by his Gospel*. The Church of old had some obscurer Intimations of it; but we, and *we only* have the Doctrine in a distinct, clear Light: We know more of the Manner and Circumstances of the Resurrection; the Nature of the Resurrection-Body, than was ever revealed before. We know that we shall rise; how; (in some measure) by whom; and to what. O my Soul! bless God for that Dispensation of Light and Grace thou art under; that thou art begotten again to a *lively Hope*, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead; Thou now seest, what many Prophets and righteous Men desired to see, and saw not; possessest and enjoyest that Day, which *Abraham* view'd at a Distance, *afar off*, with so much Pleasure. Be thankful, that he, who hath determined the Times before appointed, and the Bounds of all Mens Habitations, hath cast thy Lot under the Gospel. *Constantine* thought it a greater Honour to be a Christian, than a Prince; a Member of the Church, than Head of the Empire. May I consider my high Calling, and walk worthy thereof!

2dly, 'Tis plain from this Doctrine, that it is no Reproach to a Christian, that he professes to believe the Certainty and Reality of some Things, the *Manner* and Circumstances of which he doth not understand; (though at the same time every one, that allows himself to consider, must grant, that where there is no distinct Knowledge, there is no distinct Faith; we neither know, nor believe without Ideas, yet) we believe many Things both as Men and Christians, the particular Mode, and precise Nature of which, we are ignorant of: For Instance, the Resurrection. I know, and am as-

sured the Body shall be raised; be changed, and fashioned like to Christ's glorious Body: This in general I know; but I do not know what this fully imports; in what manner the Dead shall be raised, nor (precisely) with what Bodies they shall come; and consequently cannot here pretend to any determinate explicit Faith: So that, tho' I am to believe all God has revealed, I must not profess to know what he has not revealed; and with the same Modesty and Caution ought I to proceed, with Reference to all other Articles, especially of pure Revelation. O my Soul! vail to the Authority of God; never question what God has said, never dispute his Veracity or Power in any Instance, with Reference to this Doctrine in particular; because thou dost not understand how these things can be. In the mean time let Revelation at once found and limit thy Faith: Be not wise above what is written.

3dly, I am hence enabled to account for that Regard that has always, in the Church of God, been had to the dead Bodies of the Saints; the Solemnity of their Interment, &c. I find *Abraham*, some thousand Years ago, when a Sojourner among the Children of *Heth*, solicitous to procure a burying Place for his Family, and where particularly he might deposite the precious Remains of pious *Sarah*. *Devout Men* carried *Stephen* to his Grave, and made great Lamentations over him. *Dorcas's* Body was washed and laid in an upper Room, which was according to the Custom of the *Jews*, and other Eastern Nations. *Maimonides* saith, they not only washed the Bodies of the Dead, but anointed them with Ointments, made of diverse Kinds of Perfumes, and then wrap'd them in clean Linen. The like was practised among the Primitive Christians, sometimes with

with no small Cost, as *Tertullian* takes notice, in his Apology : We are liberal, says he, in expending the rich Spices of the *Sabæans* on the Bodies of our deceas'd Brethren, as You (the Heathens) are in your Offerings to your Gods.

Now the Design of all this was, as *Prudentius* tell us in his Hymn upon the Subject (*circa Exequias defuncti*) to testify their Belief of the Resurrection of the Dead : “ Hence, saith * he, it is “ that so much Care is taken about Sepulchres ; “ hence the Dead are washed, anointed, &c. He “ adds, What mean these beautiful Monuments, “ but to signify that what is committed to them “ is not dead, but sleepeth.” And no question, if Superstition be avoided, and we neither pervert the Christian Doctrine with respect to the Dead, nor insnare the Living, by any corrupt Rites of our own devising, some Solemnity here is allowable : There is a Regard due to the dead Bodies, especially such as die in the Lord ; they are Temples of the Holy Ghost ; and though at present cast down, they shall be built up again, with far greater Glory ; and therefore methinks, should be laid in the Grave with some Distinction ; and not as the Beasts that perish : In short, we bury in

N 3

Hopes

* Hinc maxima cura Sepulchris
 Impenditur ; hinc resolutos
 Honor ultimus accipit Artus,
 Et funeris Ambitus ornat.
 Candore nitentia claro
 Prætendere lintea Mos est,
 Asperfaq; Myrrha Sabæo
 Corpus Medicamine servat:
 Quidnam sibi Saxa cavata,
 Quid pulchra volunt Monumenta
 Nisi quod res creditur illis
 Non mortua, sed data Somno.

Hopes of a Resurrection, and thereby declare and profess our Faith in that Doctrine.

And O my Soul! improve Occasions of this Kind, as they offer, for the confirming thy Faith, exercising thy Hope, and other Graces: When thou followest thy Friend or Neighbour to his Grave, ^f employ thyself in some serious Reflections, suitable to the Subject then before thee; think of thy own Death and Corruption; that this mournful Solemnity will shortly be repeated with respect to thee: Put thyself in the Stead of thy deceased Acquaintance. “ What if it had
 “ been I? Shortly it will be my Turn: Whether
 “ I die in my full Strength, with my Breasts full
 “ of Milk, and my Bones moisten’d with Mar-
 “ row; or die in the Bitterness of my Soul, when
 “ I can never eat with Pleasure, I shall, how-
 “ ever, lie down in the Dust, and the Worms
 “ shall cover me. But, O my Soul! there is
 “ Hope in Death. This Mortal shall put on
 “ Immortality; the Trumpet shall sound, and
 “ the Dead shall be raised incorruptible: O view
 “ the glorious Scene! Hark, that’s the Voice of
 “ the Arch-angel! Behold! Yonder he comes in
 “ the Clouds! —

4thly, How glorious will the Resurrection-Day be to good Men; and what an Addition may then be expected to their former Happiness! There are many Circumstances that will add to the Solemnity

^f The *Jews* are directed (in the Office of Mourners) when they look upon the Graves of any of their Nation, to offer up this Prayer. “ Blessed be the Lord our God, who formed you with Judgment, preserved you alive; delivered
 “ you up to Death; who knows the Number of you all; who
 “ will raise you up again; who will restore you with Judgment: Blessed art thou, O Lord, who givest Life to the
 “ Dead: May the Dead live, with my dead Body may they
 “ rise again.

Pocock
 Port. Mos.

nity and Glory of it; as the Descent of Christ from Heaven in flaming Fire; the Voice of the Arch-Angel; the Trump of God, &c. which I shall not now insist upon. The Restoration of the Body, so changed and exalted, will, no doubt, be a mighty Improvement of the Happiness of the Saints: Indeed, I have, can have, but very imperfect Ideas, and Notions of the Resurrection-Body; but I'm assured it shall be glorious, be raised in Glory: Tho' what that Glory is, I can but guess at this Distance. Some have thought that the Body of *Adam*, in his original Innocency and Purity, was the Model according to which the Resurrection-Body shall be form'd: "I must *Hody*.
 " own, saith one, myself inclin'd to believe that
 " our Bodies, in the Resurrection (as to their
 " Purity, Constitution, and Liveliness) will be
 " the same with that of *Adam*, when it first
 " came out of the Hand of God, with the
 " Stamps of divine Wisdom and Goodness fresh
 " upon it: That was the true Exemplar, Original and Pattern of human Nature" Nor will the Glory of it herein (suppose it reach no farther) be inconsiderable; especially if the Conjecture of a late free and learned Writer be admitted, *viz.* That our first Parents were, as to their godies, formed after the Image of the *She-
 chinah*, which he makes to be Light, organized in human Shape: He supposes, that besides the Form, Feature, and Figure of Man, they had a luminous Vestment concentered with them, as their Ornament and Glory, the Badge of their Innocency, and Ensign of their Authority; and that, when after the Fall, 'tis said they were *Naked*, the Meaning is, they had lost this Cloathing of Light and Glory. But without laying Strefs on such Speculations, I have Assurance, that the Resur-
 N 4 rection-

*Mr. Fleming's Cbri-
 stology, V. II.
 p. 250.*

rection-Body shall be glorious, exceeding glorious, even in Fashion like Christ's glorious Body. And O, what a Day of Glory will it be, when the Saints, all the Saints, shall appear thus arrayed! with their Bodies outshining the Sun in the Firmament; with Crowns on their Heads, and Palms in their Hands!

*Sherlock on
Death, p. 61.*

No question, the Saints will find themselves in a Sort of a *New State* of Happiness, when *now* they have receiv'd their Bodies again, in so wonderful a Condition; and that in eternal indissoluble Union with their Spirit. "The Re-union of Soul and Body, faith one, will be an Addition of Happiness and Glory; for though we cannot guess what the Pleasures of glorified Bodies are, yet sure we cannot imagine that, when these earthly Bodies are the Instruments of so many Pleasures, a spiritual and glorified Body will be of no Use: A Soul and Body cannot be vitally united, but there must be a Sympathy between them, and they receive mutual Impressions from each other; and then we need not doubt, but such glorified Bodies will highly minister, though in a Way unknown to us, to the Pleasures of a divine and perfect Soul; will infinitely more contribute to the Pleasures of the Mind, than these earthly Bodies do to our sensual Pleasures." My Author adds, "Now will be the Marriage of the Lamb; this consummates our Happiness, when the Body and Soul meet again in eternal Harmony, to heighten and inflame each other's Joys." This, and a great deal more may be expected to distinguish that Day, and crown the Felicity of the Saints. O my Soul! believe and look for that blessed Hope; wait for that blessed Day, for the Adoption, the Redemption of thy Body; rejoice in Hope of the Glory of God. A

*A Seventh Meditation on the RESUR-
RECTION.*

The CONSOLATION.

IN the mean time let the Prospect of these Things of the glorious State of the Resurrection-Body, support and comfort thee under all the Exercises, Troubles, and Inconveniencies of the present Body: *We that are in this Tabernacle* ^{2 Cor. v. 4.} *groan, being burdened.* We groan and are burdened; and how many, how great our Burdens? The Tabernacle it self is a Burden, and the occasion not only of a great part of the Sins, but of most of the Sorrows of Life; 'tis a *vile Body*, ^{a Phil. iii. 21.} *Body of Abasement.* *Flesh, in which dwells no* ^{Rom. vii.} *good thing.* *A Body of Death.* How much do ^{18.} we suffer, even good Men themselves, by Means ^{Ver. 24.} of this Body? The best Saints on Earth know, and feel something of what the Apostle complains of, and calls *a Law in the Members* warring against the Law of the Mind. Nor can they be delivered from this Law, the Taint and Influence of the Body, till they are delivered out of it: Sin that *dwelleth in us*, has, like the Leprosy under the Law, so infected the House (the Body) that there's no Cure, till its pulled down, and cast into a new Mould: We groan in this Tabernacle, and as long as we are in it we shall groan, and have Cause to groan: But here's the Consolation, that this vile Body shall be changed. Shortly, O my Soul, thou wilt have a New Body; a Body in a New Edition and State, without any Pollution or Corruption, in which there shall dwell *no evil thing*; a pure spiritual refined Body, that shall annoy and
incommode

incommode thee no more; of which thou shalt complain no more for ever! O solace thy self in the Hope thereof!

And here stand a little, and compare this Body with that; this vile Body with the refined glorious Resurrection-Body: Consider what the one is, and what the other will be; and let thy future Prospects support thee under present Grievances. This present Body, it may be, is maimed, deformed, sown in Dishonour (in that Instance of it); but the Resurrection-Body will have nothing of this: There shall be no Imperfection, or Superfluity remaining; no Distortion or Irregularity of any kind, but an exact Proportion and Symmetry of Parts. We shall be rais'd in Glory.

Thy present Body is liable to a Variety of Diseases; is often a pain'd, languishing Body; so that sometimes, with the Psalmist, *thou makest thy Bed to swim, and waterest thy Couch with Tears*: Thou possessest Months of Vanity; wearisom Nights and Days are appointed to thee. Nor is it only the Uneasiness of such a State, but the Diversion it gives from the Work of Religion, that's the great Exercise of a devout Mind; which is often like a skilful Musician, who has broke his Instrument. Well, at the Resurrection this Grievance will be over: The Inhabitants of the New *Jerusalem* shall not say they are sick; their Bodies shall prosper and be in Health, as their Souls prosper: Every Saint shall enjoy, what the Philosopher reckon'd the greatest Felicity Man was capable of, *Mens sana in corpore sano*, a sound Mind in a sound and healthful Body.

Thy present Body is feeble and impotent, sown in Weakness; needs constant Repairs by Meat, Drink, Rest, Diversion, &c. If we are vigorous in Action for a few Hours, we are soon weary; the

the Body is jaded, and we are forced to pause, take Breath, and seek Recruits: Nay, must submit to die, as I may say, that is sleep, almost one half of our Time, that we may, in our Manner, live the other: But the Resurrection-Body will have none of these Infirmities; will be set above the Necessities and Demands of this Body; we shall hunger and thirst no more, but remain in a Condition of constant Vigour, Activity and Life. Hast thou, O my Soul, tasted now and then of the Pleasures of Religion, found Delights and Entertainments, such as Strangers intermeddle not with, in the more solemn Exercises of the Closet, Assembly, &c. Alas! it was but a Taste! Thy Instrument wou'd not serve long: Well, but hereafter Things will be at a better pass with thee; thy Resurrection-Body will be more potent, be capable of the Joys and Work of Heaven without fainting for ever.

Thy present Body, how great a Confinement to the Soul? what an Incumbrance and Clog to it? 'Tis really a Diminution to these Spirits of ours, that they are forced to act by the Body; to keep its Pace, and depend upon it in all their Operations. Hence we are restrain'd, cramp'd, fetter'd! What an Impediment, for Instance, is the Body to us in our rational Pursuits and Acquisitions? What slow Advances do we make in Knowledge! How must we bend the Faculties, and tug at it, to furnish the Mind with a few Ideas and Notions; and when we have done so, how apt are we to lose them? How hardly do we recover them, and bring them forth for present Use? and all this thro' the Infirmary of the Body, the Conditions of its Organs, Spirits, &c. And who feels not the Clog and Burden of the Flesh? How doth it at all Times pinion us? How doth it hang as a dead Weight to the aspiring Soul! Well, at the Resurrection this
Complaint

Complaint also will be at an End; the Body, I shall then receive, will neither hinder Contemplation nor Action; it will have no gross Fumes to cloud the Mind, nor Heaviness to depress it.

Once more the present Body is the Soul's (not only Prison, but) Snare, tempting, deluding, enslaving to Sense and sensible Things: What Dreams, Shadows, Vanities, (sometimes grossly sensual and impure) do Multitudes of poor unthinking Creatures pursue and place their Happiness in? and this very much through the Influence of the Body: And even in good Men, where the Flesh is not the governing Principle; yet, alas! How much do they suffer by the Entanglements of the Body? How doth it divert the Mind by its Pleasures; draw away the Thoughts from more rational and divine Subjects? How doth it taint it by its Imaginations, and distract it by its Cares? repeating its Importunities, so that we are scarce at Leisure to attend, either the Work or the Comforts of the divine Life. O my Soul! how art thou abas'd, humbled, and even made vile by this vile Body! Don't the *Angels*, thinkest thou, regret to see one of their Brother Spirits, thus forgetting himself, pursuing a Bubble, and triumphing in the Pleasures of a Brute! (as is often thy Case). Well, thy Resurrection-Body will have nothing of this Nature in it: It will be of a purer Constitution; will have dropt all its Passions, Infirmities, and Lusts; will delude, tempt, ensnare no more: Those Traces, which sensible Pleasures had imprinted, will be perfectly obliterated, and will give no more Disturbance; there will be no longer a Law in the Members thwarting the superior Law of the Mind. Now the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit; the Wheels of this noble Machine are sometimes disordered: Hereafter they will

will move regularly, and in entire Obedience to the Intelligence that governs them. In short, there will be full Concord between Soul and Body; all Harmony within; no more Rebellion or Disorder for ever. O Blessedness! O joyful Day! Lord, I wait for thy Salvation! I must submit to the Abasements of my present Body for a Time; wou'd endeavour to bear its Burdens, strive against its Affections and Lusts: Help me by thy Grace! But, blessed be God, that as I look for new Heavens, and a new Earth, so a new Body wherein dwelleth Righteousness.

The Eighth Meditation on the RESURRECTION.

The RESOLUTION.

MA Y I be found prepared for this solemn, awful Day! The Trumpet shall sound, and the Dead shall be rais'd, the Dead universally: *All that are in the Graves shall come forth.* John v. *There shall be Resurrection both of the Just and Un-just.* 28, 29. But this is so far from being a Comfort to wicked Men, that it will be their Averſion and Dread: The Resurrection, with respect to them, is like a Goal-Delivery (as we call an Affize) when the unhappy Prisoners are brought forth to Execution. They shall awake, but 'tis to everlasting Shame and Contempt. Their Bodies, it may be, will rise more gross and material than the Bodies of the Saints, and, no doubt, appear with extraordinary Marks of Horror upon them: And Oh! with what Reluctancy will they be dragg'd to them, and receive them again; the very Sight of which will powerfully revive the Memory of former things; and Union with them, will

will be like chaining a Murderer to the dead Body he has slain. *Christ*, 'tis true, will raise them; but 'tis as a Judge; they *shall bear his Voice*, and obey his Summons, *and come forth to the Resurrection of Damnation*. The Resurrection will be their Punishment, not their Privilege.

John v. 29.

And hence 'tis, I suppose, that the Resurrection is so often mention'd in Scripture *as of good Men*; as if none but they were to rise, as, *Luke xiv. 14.* *1 Cor. xv.* *Rom. viii. 11.* Intimating that 'tis matter of Hope and Advantage *only to these*: Others shall be rais'd, but against their Will: They wou'd be glad never more to see their Bodies again; be glad the Rocks and Mountains shou'd fall upon them. O my Soul! endeavour that thou mayest stand in a good Lot at that Day: So act in the Body, that thou mayest not be ashamed, or afraid to meet it again. O how important a Concern is this! Lord! help me to attend it. I know, as *Martha* said of her Brother *Lazarus*, that I shall rise at the Resurrection, at the last Day. But shall I rise to Life? Let this, O my Soul, be thy Enquiry and thy Care; and accordingly lay down proper Measures; fix thy Purposes, and resolve to pursue them. Particularly I would resolve (Lord help me by thy Grace!)

To endeavour after the Principles and the Improvement of a spiritual and divine Life. Such is the Depravity of human Nature, that we are said *Eph. ii. 1,* to be *dead in Trespasses and Sins*. Not that we are in a strict Sense, and without a Metaphor dead. We have natural Life, and (what I may call) intellectual Life remaining: We have the Use of our Senses, Reason, Judgment, and all our Faculties; but we have lost our Rectitude, Integrity, Purity; our Taste, Savour, and Relish of divine Things; lost a Disposition and Tendency of Soul God-wards,

God-wards, and are become earthly, sensual, Enemies to God in our very Minds, and in short, reprobate to every good Work: This is our natural Death-State, out of which there must be a Revival, a Resurrection; or Death will finally triumph over us. *You hath be quickned—Except ye be* Rom. viii. *born again, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* *The Law of the Spirit of Life, in Christ Jesus, must make us free from the Law of Sin and Death.* For to be carnally minded (to be under the Power and Influence of fleshly Principles) *is Death*; it argues a State of Spiritual Death; and will issue in eternal Death. Every true and sincere Christian is a Partaker of a *divine Nature, having* 2 Pet. i. *escaped the Corruption that is in the World thro'* ^{14.} *Lust.* O my Soul! secure this great Point, aspire after higher and higher Attainments in the spiritual and divine Life. I may here borrow and apply that *Rev. xx. 6. Blessed are they that have Part in the first Resurrection, over them the second Death hath no Power:* Lord, quicken me by thy Grace, raise me up together with Christ: Without the first Resurrection in this Sense, I shall neither escape the second Death, nor partake of the future glorious Life; but if my Soul now live by the Grace and Power of God, Soul and Body shall hereafter live by the same Grace and Power.

I would resolve to secure mine Interest in the divine Covenant and Favour: I desire to yield my self to God, and my Members Instruments of Righteousness to him; to present my Body, my entire Person, Soul and Body, a living Sacrifice to God, to be his only, entirely, and for ever. I wou'd chuse God as my God, my Felicity, and all; as my Sovereign, whose Will shall rule me, whose Wisdom shall direct me; as my Portion, whose Goodness shall sustain and satisfy me. Lord,
in

in thy Favour is Life! I wou'd accept of Christ in his Mediation; subject my self to him as my Lord, depend on him as my Saviour, and on the Spirit as *Paraclete*: I wou'd accept, renounce, resign according to the Tenor of the Covenant. O my Soul! adjust and settle this momentous Affair: If God be my Covenant-God and Father, I shall live, live eternally; my Body shall rise to Life and Glory: So my Saviour himself has taught me to expect, *Matt. xxii. 31, 32.* Lord be my God, say thou art my God, and 'tis enough: Help me to chuse thee, and rest in thee as such, and thou wilt be my Salvation.

I would also resolve to consecrate my Body as a *Temple of the Holy Ghost*: So, in unspeakable Condescension, the Bodies of Believers are called, *1 Cor. vi. 19.* Lord, come and take Possession, fuller Possession of me by thy Spirit: O prepare thy self an Habitation; fit me for thy Presence, and vouchsafe (O infinite Grace!) to *dwell in me*: Set open, O my Soul! the everlasting Doors, that the King of Glory may come in: And *if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the Dead dwell in thee, he that rais'd up Jesus from the Dead, will quicken thy mortal Body, by his Spirit that dwelleth in thee.*

I would also endeavour (Lord, help me by thy Grace) to use this Body as an holy, consecrated thing, and as expecting its after-glorious Restoration. Lord! May I never defile thy Temple: May I *possess my Vessel in Sanctification and Honour*: May Holiness to the Lord be inscrib'd on every Member. O my Soul! learn so to govern and use thy Body, that thou mayest hope to return to it with Comfort: Beg, not only that thou mayest be sanctified throughout, both in Body, Soul, and Spirit; but that all may *be preserved blameless,*

less, to the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Labour to cleanse and purify the Body more and more; to keep it under, and bring it into Subjection; that it may neither so much cloud the Mind, nor so strongly tempt it, as it often doth:

If we mortify the Deeds of the Body, we shall live. Rom. viii.

“ Holiness is the only Principle of Immortality, ^{13.} Sberlock on Death, p. 65.

“ both to Soul and Body; those love their Bo-

“ dies best; those honour them most, who make

“ them Instruments of Virtue; who endeavour

“ to refine and spiritualize them, and leave no-

“ thing of fleshly Appetites and Inclinations in

“ them: All the Severities of Mortification, Ab-

“ stinence from bodily Pleasures, Watchings,

“ Fastings, hard Lodging, &c. when they are

“ Instruments of real Virtue, and not the Arts of

“ Superstition; when they are intended to subdue

“ our Lusts, and to purchase a Liberty of sin-

“ ning, are the most real Expressions of Honour

“ and Respect to these Bodies; this is offering up

“ our Bodies as living Sacrifices; and such Sacri-

“ fices shall live for ever; and the less of Flesh

“ they carry to the Grave with them, the more

“ glorious will they rise again.” O my Soul!

herein exercise thy self, to subjugate the Senses

and sensual Inclinations: Think how inglorious

'tis, that this noble, divine Inhabitant the im-

mortal Spirit should serve the vile Body, fulfil

its Lusts, and be Lackey to the Brute. The

Philosopher could say, he's unworthy of the Name

of a Man, that would live one Day in bodily Plea-

tures; and how much more unworthy is he of the

Name of a Christian, whose profess'd Business 'tis

to prepare for a glorious Resurrection, and a fu-

ture Immortality? We should be withdrawing

and weaning from the Body, as much as we can;

this becomes us both as leaving it, as we soon

must,

must, and as expecting it again in a new Form and State. 'Tis said of *Plotinus*, that he blushed, and was asham'd to be found in the Body. *Antoninus* calls Death the Deliverance of the Soul from the Impressions of Sense, the Tyrannies of the Passions, the Errors of the Mind, and the Servitude and Drudgeries of the Body. O my Soul! learn of *Pagans*, how to esteem and employ the Body; be not fond of it, fond of its Pleasures, of its vain Titillations; but labour to live above it; to govern and keep it under, in a State of Subserviency to the Mind: Consecrate it wholly to thy God, and therein to Immortality.

The ASPIRATION and PRAYER.

O My God! wilt thou assist me in this great and difficult Work? I apply my self to Thee, from whom cometh my Help: To Thee, O Lord, my Srength and my Salvation. Confirm me more and more in the Belief of this important Article; help me to look for the blessed Hope, and glorious Appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; that I may know him, and the Power of his Resurrection, being made conformable to his Death: O that I may press towards the Mark, for the Prize of the high Calling; if by any Means (help me to use all proper Means, and to use them with suitable Zeal and Diligence) I may attain to the Resurrection of the Dead. May I overcome evil Habits, Slothfulness, Love of Ease, and all bodily Pleasures: May I subdue the Flesh, its Inclinations, undue Desires and Appetites; keep under my Body, and bring it into more present Subjection to the Mind. Lord, strengthen me for this Warfare; strengthen me by thy

thy Spirit with Might in the inner Man: Many are the Trials, Temptations and Dangers of this bodied State. I commit my Spirit to thy Tuition and Defence; fortify it against the Impressions of Sense, and sensible Things; the Snares and Entanglements of the Flesh; help me to strive for Mastery, and to be temperate in all things. O may I not miss the Recompence at the Resurrection of the Just: May the Sound of the last Trumpet be a joyful Sound to me, a Jubilee proclaiming my Release, and beginning a new Triumph; and *when Christ, who is my Life, shall appear, may I appear with him in Glory, and so be for ever with the Lord.*

*A Meditation on the final State of HAP-
PINESS.*

HA VING prepared your self as before, by a short Ejaculation for the divine Assistance, set your self as in the Presence of God to consider and survey the great Subject proposed, *the Happiness of Heaven*: Your Text may be, 2 Cor. xii. 2, 4. *I knew a Man in Christ above fourteen Years ago, whether in the Body, I cannot tell or whether out of the Body, I cannot tell, God knoweth; such a one caught up to the third Heaven; and I knew such a Man, whether in the Body, &c. how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable Words, which is not lawful for a Man to utter: where, say you, I have to consider,*

1st, The Person concerned in this Matter; *I knew a Man in Christ*, meaning himself; otherwise the Mention of it here would not have been to his Purpose; which was to support his Credit, with

the wavering *Corinthians*, and baffle the Pretences of such as endeavoured to undermine his Reputation with them ; none of whom had been caught up to the third Heaven, as he intimates he himself was.

2dly, The Time of this Rapture, and the Visions and Revelations that ensued ; ingeneral *abovefourteen Years ago* ; that is above fourteen Years before he wrote this Epistle : Some refer it to the Time of his Conversion ; when he was struck from Heaven, in so extraordinary a Manner, and brought to the Foot of Christ, with a *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ?* In which Posture of Abasement
 Acts ix. 9. and Self-Annihilation, as I may call it, *be continued three Days and three Nights at Damascus, and did neither eat nor drink.* And 'tis supposed, that during this Space, he had the Rapture here mention'd : But whether this be so or not, it is not improbable that now it was that, as he tells
 Gal. i. 12. us, *he was taught the Gospel by the Revelation of Jesus Christ.* If he was not now taken up to Heaven, he had a great deal of Heaven communicated to him : *Damascus* was his best School, there he receiv'd his Instructions, far more to his Advantage, than all he had learnt at the Feet of *Gamaleel* : And though 'tis granted this was an Instance of extraordinary Grace, yet God still exerciseth his Sovereignty over the Hearts of Men as he pleaseth, and sometimes in a Manner not unlike what we hear read : He can enlighten, form, and frame them, to answer his own Purposes, by his special, powerful Influences ; can subdue a proud *Pharisee*, change his Heart and Temper, remove all Prejudices, lay him in the Dust, and turn him into another sort of a Creature, and *this in an instant* : Lord, may I be as effectually taught to know thee, and my self ; taught thy Gospel !

Gospel ! I would be content to have the Eyes of the Body shut, that the Eyes of the Mind may be more opened.

3dly, The Rapture it self, with ~~some~~ Circumstances relating to it; as (1.) The Place he was caught up to, (*viz.*) *the third Heaven*, v. 2. and into *Paradise*, v. 4. Whether *Paradise* and the third Heaven be the same Place, or different, is disputed ^s; but as the Debate is not of any great Importance, so not so suitable to my present Design: I can't question but there will be a considerable Change made in the State of Heaven after the Resurrection; but that there are two distinct States of Blessedness *at present*, *Paradise* and *Heaven*, is a Supposition not so well supported, as some may imagine.

2dly, What he met with there; *he heard unspeakable Words, which 'tis not lawful for a Man to utter*: Ἀρρητὰ ῥήματα, Words he *could* not, or *might* not utter. I cannot but observe, that when it is said, *he was caught up to the third Heaven*;

O 3

there

^s Dr. *Whitby* delivers it not only as his Opinion, but the Opinion of all the Antients, that the third Heaven and *Paradise* are different Places: And * *Bishop Bull*, in his Discourse *of the middle State of Happiness or Misery*, has taken a great deal of Pains to defend this Notion: He makes *Paradise* the Receptacle of holy Souls, immediately upon the Dissolution of the Body; and the *third Heaven* he makes the higher State of Happiness, they are advanced to, after the Resurrection. And speaking of the Rapture in this Text, he observes, That the *Apostle* had represented to him, *first*, The most perfect Joys of the third Heaven: But lest so long an Expectation should discourage him, he saw also the intermediate Joys of *Paradise*. But methinks 'tis an Objection against this Notion, not easily to be got over, that we find the same *Apostle* declaring his Expectation, and Confidence of being with Christ *immediately* upon his Death, *I desire to depart, and to be with Christ*, Phil. i. 23. Now should it be granted that Christ, when he died

* Important Points of Christianity, Vol. I. p. 21.

there is no Mention of what he heard or saw : Which it is not so probable would have been wholly passed over in Silence, if it was another Place distinct from *Paradise*, and the more glorious.

3dly, The Effect this wonderful Sight had upon him ; the Surprize of which was such, that he knew not whether he was in the Body, or out of it, *i. e.* whether his Spirit was separated from the Body, and taken up to *Paradise*, or he was carried up Soul and Body together : This he knew not, he says : And how then should we know it ? Or why should we enquire after it ? Who can tell us, if the *Apostle* could not himself tell ? It is like he was so ravish'd with the unspeakable Words, the Glories of *Paradise*, with the Company that assisted his Passage thither, and entertained him there, that he quite forgot the Body. Some on Earth have felt a little of this ; even when there has been no proper Extasy or Rapture : Spiritual Things have so engag'd their Attention, arrest-
ed

died upon the Cross, pass'd into *Paradise*, in the Sense of these Authors, *i. e.* into *Hades*, or the supposed Region of Bliss for separate Souls ; yet after his Resurrection, we are assured he went to the Right Hand of God ; *he ascended far above all Heavens*, Eph. iv. 10. We must therefore either say (1st) That the *Apostle* was mistaken in his Expectation or Hope : Or (2^{dly},) That the Privilege of being with Christ, at Death, was peculiar to him ; for which there is not the least Reason ; not to say that elsewhere he mentions it, as the common Privilege of Believers, 2 Cor. v. 8. *We are willing to be absent from the Body, and present with the Lord* : Or (3^{dly},) That there is no intermediate *Hades*, or *Paradise* distinct from Heaven : The *Apostle* expected after his Dissolution and Death to be where Christ is (*i. e.*) in Heaven ; in a State of Blessedness, indifferently called *Paradise*, or the third Heaven ; tho' differing, no doubt, from the final State of Happiness, after the Resurrection.

ed their Minds, and filled their Faculties, as to raise them above the Body, and the little Concernments thereof. Of how great Account ordinarily is this Body with us? How many can relish nothing without it; value nothing above it, or besides it? but the Words of *Paradise*, the purer Delights of that State, were we better acquainted with them, did we taste and relish them, as even at present we might, would diminish the Sense of these lower Enjoyments; would drown the Noise of earthly Things, and bring the Body into a just Neglect with us.

But I shall take a nearer and closer View of the Words, in which I observe two Things. 1st, The Reality and Certainty of a future State: Here's even a sensible Evidence of it: For behold one *caught up to Paradise*. 2^{dly}, Some Intimation of the Nature of that State, viz. a State of Delight and Pleasure, hence called *Paradise*^h in Allu-

O 4

sion

^h The Word *Paradise* comes originally from the *Hebrew* *Pardes*; which signifies an Orchard or Garden: It is used three times in the *Old Testament*, and always in this Sense: The *Greek* Παράδεισος is of the same Signification, literally importing a Garden, and more strictly a Garden of Delights. Hence what *Moses* in the *Hebrew* calls *Gan Eden*, a Garden of Pleasure; the *Greek* Version of the *LXX* calls *Paradise*: And from hence, in the *New Testament*, it is borrowed to express the State of future Happiness; as *Luke* xxiii. 43. *2 Cor.* xii. 4. *Rev.* ii. 7. Nor were the *Jews* unacquainted with this Notion of *Paradise*; they often speak of an inferior and superior (the earthly and celestial) *Paradise*; which the *Cabalists*, according to their Manner of spelling Mysteries out of Scripture, think were represented by God's putting *Adam* into the *Garden of Eden*, at two several times, *Gen.* ii. 8. 15. The earthly *Paradise* being a Place of great Delight and Felicity, they made it an Emblem of the Place and State of Happiness in the other World: Hence it is used to be the solemn Wish of the *Jews* concerning their dear Friend, *Let his Soul be gathered into the Garden of Eden*: And in their Prayers for a dying Person they used to say, *Let him have his Portion in Paradise*.

sion to the ancient *Paradise*, or Garden of *Eden*, which was the Seat and Residence of innocent
 Rev. ii. 7. *Adam. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the Tree of Life, that is in the Paradise of God. He shall partake of the Comforts and Pleasures of Heaven, figured by the Tree of Life in the earthly Paradise. Heaven is the true Paradise; there is Life and Blessedness, which the Garden of Eden, and its symbolical Tree, were only Types of.*

In my farther Meditation upon this Subject I shall, (1.) Premise a few Things concerning this State in general. (2.) Enquire into the Happiness of it; into the particular Pleasures that constitute *Paradise*. (3.) Prove there is such a State. (4.) Make Application to my self.

(1.) I shall premise a few Things concerning this State in general: As (1st) That there is a State of Happiness, that good Men enter upon,
 Phil. i. 23. *immediately after Death: I desire to depart, says the Apostle, and be with Christ. When Lazarus died, he was carried by Angels into Abraham's Bosom, Luke xvi. Which must imply, that he was in a State of Happiness, whatever be the special, precise Meaning of the Phrase; and therefore it*
 Ver. 25. *is said he was comforted. Notwithstanding,*

2^{dly}, The Pleasures of *Paradise* are not complete, till after the Resurrection, and future Judgment: Then it is that the Servants of Christ most fully
 Mat. xxv. *enter into the Joy of their Lord. Then the Crown*
 21. *of Life is given them, i. e. They then receive*
 2 Tim. iv. *their more perfect Joy, and final Crown: They*
 8. *have not before been openly acquitted and own'd: They wanted their Body, and so far were suffering the Penalty of the Apostacy. In short, they have not, till then, the Happiness of the entire Person; and, consequently not an entire Happiness!*

piness : So that the most perfect State of the heavenly *Paradise* will be after the Resurrection ; not but that departed Souls are happy before ; but not fully happy : Then Heaven will be most eminently a *Paradise*.

3dly, Let me farther premise, that though I am sure *Paradise* is a State of great Delights and Happiness, yet I can form but very imperfect Notions of it at present : *It does not yet appear* ^{1 John iii.} *what we shall be.* As the new Heavens of the Gospel State were represented to the *Jews* by various Types ; so the future Heaven is represented to us Christians by sundry Metaphors ; in which, as was said of their Law, we have only the *Shadow* ^{Heb. x. 1.} *of good Things to come, and not the very Substance of the Things themselves.* We are not, whilst in the Body, capable of taking in a clear, distinct Account of Heaven : However, God has seen fit, in some Measure, to vail and cover it from us. The *Apostle* in *Paradise* heard *unspeakable Words ; Words, which it was not lawful to utter :* He learnt more by that View of Heaven than he had leave to communicate to the Church on Earth ; and, it is probable, more than any Language he could use was able to communicate. That World is very much to us, *Terra incognita*, an unknown Country ; the Glory of it is *yet to be revealed.* ^{1 Pet. iv.} Particularly we know not, nor are we able to ^{13.} form any Conception of the Matter, how the Soul acts during the intermediate State, when out of the Body, and deprived of its present Instruments and Organs : We understand not how we

i " We know not how the Soul *perceives*, when out of the *Body* ; whether by the Help of some new subtiller Organs and Instruments, fitted to its present State ; which, either by its own native Power given it in Creation, it forms to
 " itself, ^{Bull's important Points of Christianity Vol. I. p. 87.}

we can see without an Eye, hear without an Ear, reason without a Brain, &c. We know not what the Resurrection-Body will be; what Members it shall have, and what will be the Use of them; what Difference there will be in the Manner of the Soul's Operation, in the separate State, whilst without a Body, and in the final State, when again united to one. We know but very imperfectly how we shall be employed in *Paradise*; what Worship we shall perform; and how it will be perform'd. We know not particularly what Intercourse and Converse there is among the Saints in the other World; much less how 'tis carried on; how they express their Sentiments, and communicate their Thoughts one to another. We know not what the beatifick Vision means, so much spoke of among us, and wherein so much of Heaven is suppos'd to consist: *We shall see him as he is.* But we must see him, before we know what 'tis thus to see him. We know not the Place of Heaven, know not where *Paradise* is, nor whether it be the

1 John iii.
2.

" itself, or by a special Act of the divine Power it is supplied
 " with; or whether it perceives and acts without them. Nor
 " is this strange; for now we can scarce explain how we see
 " or hear, how we think or understand, least of all how we
 " remember, tho' we have continual Experience of all these
 " Operations in ourselves." I mention not this, as if it was
 with me any Difficulty to believe the Soul can act without
 the Body: 'Tis really a greater Difficulty (setting aside Experience)
 to believe, and to account for its Union with the Body, and acting
 by it, than its subsisting and acting in a separate State. How a
 pure Spirit can unite with Matter, and by a single Act of the Will
 move the Hand, Foot, or any Member; command the whole Body;
 use its Organs and Spirits in its Operations, is all Mystery, and
 unintelligible; only we know by Experience it is so: And as we
 know by *Revelation* it shall act without the Body, 'tis no Objection
 against it, that at present we understand not how.

the same now as after the Resurrection: These, and a great deal more, are among the Ἀπόκρυφα *Ῥήματα*, the Secrets of the heavenly State. Learn therefore, O my Soul! to think and speak thereof with Caution and Reserve; don't irreverently tear aside the Veil, and intrude into Things thou hast not seen,

I'll only add, 4thly, That which is *certain* concerning Heaven is its *general Nature*. 'Tis represented in Scripture by a Variety of Metaphors; as a City; a Kingdom; a Crown; a Crown of Life; everlasting Life; the Joy of our Lord; *Paradise*, &c. All which import the same thing (tho' they give different Views of it, and shew it in a different Light) viz. That 'tis a *State of Happiness*, of Honour, Preferment, and Comfort: A State of *exceeding great Happiness*; the several Phrases intimate this, and so we are assured elsewhere: *In thy Presence is Fulness of Joy*. Nay, Ps. xvi. ult. 'tis a State of *complete Happiness*, especially after the Resurrection: *The Spirits of just Men are made perfect*. Heb. xii. They are perfect in their Natures, and ^{23.} perfect in their Enjoyments: Their Desires are filled and answered; they need, they crave no more. *When I awake, I shall be satisfied with thy Likeness*. Psal. xvii. ult. This is the Scripture Account of Heaven, and what we may assuredly depend upon: 'Tis a *State of Happiness, of great and perfect Happiness*.

A Second Meditation of HEAVEN.

BUT though this be what is most certain, and what the Scripture *more clearly* reveals, with Reference to the future State of Blessedness, Heaven

Heaven or *Paradise*; yet it gives several Hints and Intimations farther concerning its more *particular Nature*; and consequently warrants and encourages my farther Searches into it. I shall not therefore take up with this short and general Account; but under the Conduct of divine Revelation, the only sure Rule in this Case, I shall proceed to the next thing proposed, *viz.*

2dly, To enquire into the Happiness or Blessedness of *Paradise*; into the Pleasures that constitute Heaven, and make it a *Paradise*: And in general two Things are manifestly included in it: *The Removal of all evil, and the Presence and Confluence of all Good*; of every suitable Good, that concerns the Felicity and Perfection of a rational, immortal Spirit: Both these are essential to Happiness. Every Degree of Evil is, so far, a Diminution of Happiness: Whilst I suffer any positive Evil, or want any suitable Good, I am proportionably not happy. So that as Heaven is a *Paradise*, a State of perfect Blessedness, it supposes, and includes both these; the Absence of all that may be called Evil, and Presence of every proper Good. There's *no Evil and all Good*.

1st, *Paradise* the Happiness of the State) includes and supposes the Absence of all Evils. Our Apostacy from God let in a Flood of Misery, which has overflowed our World: That Sentence pronounced in Case of Disobedience, lies upon Mankind, *In the Day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*, Die, *i. e.* thou shalt lose thy Comforts, and commence miserable. And tho' the divine Mercy and Grace interposed and saved us from the Execution of the Sentence in its full Latitude and Extent; yet it did not wholly remove it: And therefore we find, after the promised Deliverance by the *Seed of the Woman*, the Sentence

Gen. ii.
17.

Gen. iii.
15.

Sentence in part, still stands in Force, as what was to take place against the Offenders: The Serpent, the Woman, the Man, the Earth, all are cursed. This is the Case of Mankind, since the Ver. 16, Fall: He is under a Curse, in a sort of a *Death* 17, 18, 19. *State*. He is not only liable to a natural Death, which he must unavoidably undergo; but there is a Vanity and Disappointment in all his Enjoyments; and a great Variety of Sorrows and Sufferings that attend him, and follow him through his whole Life and Course.

(1.) There is a Vanity and Disappointment in all his Enjoyments; the Curse is, in this Sense, universal: it reaches every Person, every Con- Job xiv. 1. dition, rich and poor, every Age, Childhood Pf. lxii. 9. and Youth, every State. This every one feels, Ecclef. xi. 10. and the longer he lives in the World, the fuller Pf. xxxix. 5. is his Conviction of it. Vanity and a Curse has seized all our Comforts; mixes with them, and, like a Worm, smites the Gourd of our present Happiness, that it withereth. I dare appeal to the Experience of Mankind, on this Head: Let *Solomon* speak for them; who after he had tried all Conclusions, and had endeavoured to extract the Quintessence out of every Enjoyment; had gratified himself with Mirth, Wine, Women, stately Buildings, Vineyards, Orchards, Gardens, Pools of Water, a great Retinue, Men-singers, Women-singers, Instruments of Musick, the peculiar Treasures of Kings and Provinces; the Delights of the Sons of Men; in short, *what- Eccl. ii. 1, ever his Eyes desired, he kept not from them; he 10. with-held not his Heart from any Joy.* After this Experiment, I say, *after* he had, like the laborious Bee, searched every Flower, he stands still, as it were, makes a Review, and gives his Judgment of all: *Then I looked on all the Works that Ver. 11. my*

my Hands had wrought, and all the Labour I had laboured to do, and behold all was Vanity and Vexation of Spirit, and there was no Profit under the Sun: And what can a Man do that cometh after the King? Here was a Concurrence of Circumstances that promised as fair for Happiness as could be expected; a Largeness of Soul, a Fulness of earthly Delights, and a designed resolute Improvement of all these Advantages, in order to Happiness: And behold the Result and Issue! The Curse follows the Enquirer, and he is forced to pronounce *all is Vanity and Vexation of Spirit*. He found what he himself declares elsewhere, *That the Eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the Ear with hearing*.

This, O my Soul! is the Condition of Things here below with thy self, and with the whole human Race: We may promise our selves Rest, Contentment, Happiness in this and the other State; but 'tis all Delusion and Cheat: Riches, Honour, Beauty, Relations, Friends, all say 'tis not in us. No, there is a Kind of *Death* that runs through all, blasts all. We are condemned to *eat our Bread in the Sweat of our Face*. Condemned to Labour and Toil; (some in one Way, and some in another) and while we do so, the Curse flows down upon us, often prevents the Success, and destroys the Comfort of our Labour; takes the Sweetness out of every Fruition, and leaves it a *Caput mortuum*, a dead, insipid, spiritless thing! Thus the World has found it, in all past Ages. I lay no Stress upon the Fable some report, that as soon as *Adam* had sinned, he was visited with a *Phthisis*, or inward Consumption, of which he all along languished, and at last died. But it is certain a woful *Phthisis* has invaded his Posterity; they have lain under the Sentence of
Death,

Death, of Vanity, and a Curse for some thousand Years. Farther,

(2.) He is not only not happy, but really miserable, exposed to Sorrows and Sufferings innumerable. Could one view and behold the Inhabitants of this World at once, what a Scene of Distress would appear? How great a Part should we see lying in Sackcloth, and bathing in Tears? some afflicted in their Bodies, others in their Minds, others in their Estates, Names, Relations: and some in all: Sometimes a Cloud hangs over the House, which is often discharging it self, and then gathers again. The Relations in which we promise our selves the greatest Comfort, prove the greatest Cross, *I am weary of my Life*, saith *Rachel*, *because of the Daughters of Heth, her Son's Wives*. A prudent *Abigail* hath a churlish *Nabal*, as the Companion and Trial of her Life: An holy *Job* has one in his Bosom to wound and tempt him. This Child is a *Miser*, that a *Prodigal*, this a *Fool*, that a *Rake*: And what with one, and what with another, how often are thoughtful Parents gray Hairs brought down with Sorrow to the Grave! O the Grievances, Vexations, and Troubles of the present State! Who can number them? *All our Days are passed away in thy Wrath*. We generally come weeping into the World, and in a great measure go weeping through it: And tho' the Passage is but short, (the Cradle stands near the Grave) yet sometimes we are ready to think it tedious; *are weary with our Groaning*.

Nor is this Death, Curse, Vanity and Misery confined to the Enjoyments of this Life, the things of this present World; but extends itself to Religion, to our spiritual Negotiations and Intercourse. Our Apostacy has tainted the Mind,

Mind ; Death has seized our Faculties, and very much disabled them for their proper Functions, for divine Exercises ; which is true in a lower Degree of good Men, as well as others. They find Reason to complain of a *Law in their Members warring against the Law in their Mind ; of a Body of Sin and Death*. Religion is become a *Warfare, a Fight!* and cannot be carried on without Striving, Watching, Difficulty, and continual Returns of Labour and Pains : And after all, how frequent our Disappointments and Miscarriages ? There is a Languor and Faintness in our Devotion, an Iniquity in our holy Things, an Imperfection in our best Services. So that even in this State, in this best State, in our religious Capacity we are still Vanity, altogether Vanity : Indeed here is our chief Solace, our great Relief under the other Troubles of Life ; and yet *even here* we are not without our Troubles and Exercises : If without are Fightings, *within* are Fears ; the Frame often disordered ; the Soul disinclined ; the Mind clouded ; the Heart dead, deceitful, treacherous ; the Affections tainted, earthly, sensual. O wretched Man, who shall deliver ! This is thy Condition in the present World ; this the Curse that lies upon thee, the Vanity and Death that pursues thee.

Well, in *Paradise!* O grateful Sound ! Blessed News ! There shall be a Deliverance ; a full, entire, eternal Deliverance from all this ! *They rest from their Labours*, God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes ; *there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor Crying, neither shall there be any more Pain, for the former things are passed away*. Former Grievances, troublesome Exercises, both of Body and Mind ; all Sorrows and Sufferings, all Kinds and Degrees thereof shall

Rev. xiv.
13.

—xxi. 4.

shall cease for ever; Sin shall be fully pardoned, and all the Effects of it abolished; *there shall be no more Curse* This, O my Soul! is Heaven; 3. and how comfortable, how glorious a State! How amiable an Idea doth it give thee of it! Even this alone, was there nothing farther to be expected, is almost enough to make it a *Paradise*, and recommend it to thy Affection and Choice: That Flood of Tears, which sometimes follows the Christian to the very Gates of Heaven, shall then bid him farewell for ever; and nothing remain of them but a grateful * Remembrance to inance the Pleasures of the Deliverance. This, O my Soul is *Paradise*: It is supposed to it, it is included in it, and justly may be esteemed as Part of its Happiness: After thou hast been tossed with Sorrows and Tempests, thou shalt there find a quiet Harbour, an everlasting Rest.

A Third Meditation of HEAVEN.

2dly, **A**S there is the Absence of all Evil, so the Presence and Confluence of all Good. Heaven is a State of Delights and Pleasures, as the Word *Paradise* imports. What these are, I am now to enquire: What the Pleasures, that constitute *Paradise*. And,

1st, There is the *Pleasures of the Place*; which though it be not among the principal Ingredients of After-Happiness, is however of some Consideration. It is the *New Jerusalem*, the Palace of the Great King; the City of the living God; a lively Description of which we have, *Rev. xxi.* Its Wall is said to be *great and high*: It has *twelve Gates, and at the Gates twelve Angels*: The Dimensions

menſions of it *twelve thouſand Furlongs; the building of the Wall of Jasper, and the City pure Gold, like unto clear Glaſs. The Foundations of the Wall of the City garniſhed with all manner of precious Stones. The firſt Foundation Jasper; the ſecond Sapphire; the third a Chalcedony; the fourth an Emerald, &c.* Now though this may more immediately, and directly refer to ſome more glorious State of the Church on Earth; yet I reckon it is deſcribed in Terms borrowed from the triumphant Church, to which they more peculiarly agree; eſpecially when 'tis ſaid of this City, that *nothing there enters that deſileth*, v. 27. and that it hath no need of the Sun, neither of the Moon to ſhine in it, adding, *The Glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof.* Heaven ſeems to be ultimately meant, which is called a City, and a City that has Foundations, *whoſe Builder and Maker is God.* Where the Place of Paradiſe is, we know not, nor do we know what it is; only we may conclude, it will be a Place of great Glory and Magnificence, ſuitable to the Preſence that fills it, and the Inhabitants that poſſeſs it: This the Metaphors in general import. Nor is it unlike there ſhould be a *viſible Schechinah*; ſome outward ſenſible Diſplay and Maniſteſtation of God, ſuch as was frequently ſeen in the Tabernacle and Temple of old, and upon the Mount of Tranſfiguration: *The Glory of God doth lighten it.*

Heb. xi.
10.

Ver. 23.

And, O my Soul! how great a Pleaſure will it afford, not only to behold, but dwell in this Glory? *When the Queen of Sheba ſaw the Grandeur and Magnificence of Solomon's Court, the Houſe he had built, his Furniture, Retinue, &c.* ſhe was ſo ſurprized, that 'tis ſaid ſhe had no Spirit left in her. *Happy are theſe thy Servants, ſaith ſhe,*

1 Kings. x.
4, 5.

Ver. 8.

she, *that stand continually before thee.* But how much greater Entertainment may we expect the *New Jerusalem* will afford? What a *Paradise* will that be, where the Throne of God is, and of the Lamb? Where the divine Majesty appears in the fullest Light, and where his Glory dwells!

2dly, There is *the Pleasure of the Company*: It is a most glorious Place, and will be suitably replenished. In *Paradise* is *the general Assembly*, Heb. xii. *the Church of the First-born, an innumerable Company of Angels, &c.* There we shall sit down with *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*; with all the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, and Confessors in the Kingdom of God: And Oh! the ravishing Delights of such a Society! What sweet Counsel will the Saints take together? How will they mingle Hearts and Affections? What pleasant Lectures will they read on the several Providences they passed through, which concerned the Church and themselves more particularly? We shall probably hear *Moses* and *Elias* (who talked with Christ in his Transfiguration? hear *Noah* and *David*, and others reporting with admirable divine Comments, the History of their own Lives and Experiences.

Nor will the *Angels*, we may suppose, refuse to admit us to the Intimacies of their Converse: We shall, it is like, have the Honour and Satisfaction of discoursing with them about their Embassies into our World; hear from them the particular Services they did us in the Course of their Ministry towards us: How, at such a time, they were sent to succour, support, deliver, to admonish of Danger, suggest Advice, &c. And Oh! the Heaven of this! 'Tis a sort of Heaven to think of it at a Distance. *Socrates* comforted himself when he came to die, with the Consideration

* De Senec-
tute.

ration that he shou'd go to *Homer*, *Hesiod*, and other brave Men, whom their Character had endear'd to him. So * *Tully*, *O præclarum Diem*, &c. " O blessed Day, saith he, when I shall go to the " Assembly and Congregation of divine Souls, " and particularly, as he adds, to my *Cato*; " when I shall depart from this Puddle of Man- " kind to such a Society! " But how much more excellent and glorious the *Cætus fidelium*, the College of Christians? How much greater the Satisfaction it will afford? especially if it be considered, that as they are *all* Saints, so they are altogether Saints: Saints in their compleat perfect State; free from all Infirmary; among whom there will be no Shyness, Distance; no Pride or Selfishness; no Vanity, Passion; no remaining Corruption to alienate Minds, or taint their Converse. This, O my Soul! thou mayest expect in Heaven: This will be one of the Pleasures of *Paradise*. At Death thou shalt be gathered into *Abraham's* Bosom, and live in eternal Communion, in delightful, mutual Embraces with all the Saints.

Heb. xii.
23.

1 John iii.
2.

3dly, There is *the Pleasure of the inward State*, viz. a State of consummate Grace, and full Conformity to God. *The Spirits of just Men are made perfect. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.* Not that we shall be absolutely, and in every Respect like God. It were Blasphemy to suppose that. As none is good but God, so strictly speaking none is Holy, Just, or Perfect, but God. The Excellencies of the highest Angels are below, even infinitely below those of the divine Mind. Nor will all the Saints have the same Degrees of Perfection in Heaven; *as one Star differeth from another Star in Glory*, so do the Saints in their Resurrection-State, and consequent Blessedness. Their Advancement and Happiness here-
after

after will, I doubt not, be different, according to their different Improvements in Grace, Holiness, and Usefulness in this World.

Nor is it likely their Perfection will be *simul & semel*, † all at once. God is infinite, absolutely perfect, and incapable of Addition and Improvement: But 'tis not reasonable to think the Saints, even in *Paradise*, are so; that they *immediately* arrive at the highest Pitch of their Attainments: 'Tis not likely they shall know as much of God and his Works, the very Moment or Hour they are admitted to *Paradise*, as they will do, after they have been contemplating the glorious Objects that surround them Myriads of Years: They'll learn the Song of *Zion* better, understand the Hallelujahs of Heaven better, when they have been for Ages employed therein, than at first. By beholding the blessed God they'll be more enlighten'd, more impress'd; have their Hearts more enlarg'd, and be proportionably fill'd. This I apprehend to be the Case, not asserting that it is, only supposing that it may.

In the mean time every Saint in Heaven is perfect and happy; perfectly happy. Their Desires are bounded and satisfied, so as neither to grudge another's Portion, nor aspire with Uneasiness after an higher Station. *In thy Presence is Fulness of Joy.* This the lowest Saint in Heaven finds: He Psal. xvi. ult. is satisfied, each one is satisfied with the divine Likeness.

O 3

In

† Since the writing of this, the pious and ingenious Mr. *Watts* has published some curious and entertaining Thoughts upon the Saints Perfection in the other World, and has offered very probable Reasons to prove that it admits of Advances and Increase; to whom I refer the Reader for farther Satisfaction on this Head, and on other Subjects touch'd in the present Discourse.

In short, the Souls of good Men in the heavenly *Paradise*, shall be changed and transformed into as great a Resemblance of God, as their full Happiness requires. *The new Man is now renewed after the Image of him that created him.* That's the Pattern and Exemplar. But alas! how far do we fall short thereof? The divine Work, at present, is at best but a rough Draught, that has little of the Beauties of the Original: But in *Paradise* it shall be finished; there shall be an entire Rectitude of Mind; every Faculty be suitably adorn'd, and the whole Soul shine with all the Lustre and Brightness of the divine Image.

Particularly (just to glance at a Subject copious enough to fill a Volume) our Knowledge will then be perfect; (in the Sense mentioned.) We shall be ignorant of nothing that 'tis fit for us to know, and that concerns our Happiness. All those sublime and more difficult Points of Revelation and Faith, which now puzzle and divide learned Men, shall be cleared up, so far as we have any Interest in them: And, no question, we shall wonder at our former Ignorance, and much more at our former Rashness and Presumption. Our Knowledge shall be extensive; we shall know God in his Nature, Works, Providences: The meanest Saint will be able then to philosophize, far above the greatest *Adept* in the present State: And then this Knowledge will be clear, distinct, easy, by *Intuition*, as it were. As we now know but little, so 'tis at great Expence that we know what we do. We first receive certain Principles, which are as the Foundations of Knowledge; and from thence, by very tedious, laborious, and often very uncertain Conclusions, we proceed to other Truths that we apprehend connected with them. And thus, by Degrees, we acquire a small
Stock,

Stock, which we set up with, and have the Vanity to call Wisdom Learning, *Profound Learning!* though in Reality 'tis little better than a Collection of Blunders, compared with the Light of the other World: Heaven is the Region of Light, pure unclouded Light; there's neither Labour nor Mistake attending their Enquiries. "The
 " Saints will then, as one speaks, have their
 " Vestment of Light, upon as cheap Terms as
 " the Lilies their Ornaments: *And yet Solomon,*
 " *in all his Glory of Wisdom and Understanding,*
 " *was not arrayed like one of them."*

And as Knowledge, so Love, Humility, Meekness, Subjection, Resignation, Delight, Joy, and every other Grace will then be perfected. There's every Grace without any Mixtute, any thing of the contrary Alloy: *The King's Daughter is all glorious within.* There the Spouse shall answer that Character without a Figure, or any Abatement in the Interpretation. *Thou art all fair, my* Cant. iv.
Love, there is no Spot in thee. Here, in our best 7.
 Strains, we are but *pressing towards the Mark.* Our most lively, successful Endeavours in Religion, are but a vigorous Effort to throw off a dead Weight, and Burden of Corruption; which alas! still cleaves to us. In *Paradise* this Struggle will be over; we shall then have attain'd full Perfection, entire Happiness. This, O my Soul! is Heaven, this is part of the Pleasure of *Paradise.* Thou wilt then view thy self in all the Accomplishments of the divine Image.

4thly, There is *the Pleasure of the Frame*, consequent upon the former. The Heart will be always in Tune, every Faculty in its due State and Posture: there will be no Jar and Confusion within; no Rebellion in the inferior, against the superior Powers; but the whole Soul so disposed, as it

ought to be, towards God, itself, and towards others: Never disturbed with any Corruptions, hurried with any Passions; no more Clouds in the Mind, or Tumult in the Affections; but an entire perfect Rectitude, as is implied in what was said before. And who can estimate the Pleasure, the Joy, and even Triumph, that flows from hence?

Take an improved Christian in his best Frame, when most serious, solemn and devout; the Heart enlarged, following hard after God, the Affections set on Things above, raised to the highest Pitch he ever attains; Corruptions, for the present, still, and laid dead at his Foot; and suppose this Frame to continue for a Day, or a Week: Such a one for the time, would have a little Heaven of it; would really know more of Heaven, have a more sensible Idea of *Paradise*, than the most artful Description in the World could convey to him: And such a Frame, in its Perfection, and made unchangeable, is the very Heaven I am enquiring after. This, O my Soul! is *Paradise*. Here thou wilt find a full Pleasure, an entire Acquiescence and Rest; beyond which thou wilt need, or desire no more. Now thou wilt be filled with that *Righteousness* thou art *thirsting after*. Now thou wilt compleatly enjoy thy self, and thy God, and therein be happy for ever.

Matth. v.
6.

5thly, There's the *Pleasure of the Work and Employment*; though here I find a Veil interposing: No doubt, but the Soul, as it is essentially Life and Action, will be constantly employed in the other State, and that with suitable Comfort, and Pleasure to itself; but wherein, or how it shall be employ'd, at present we rather guess than know: 'Tis probable, the Exercise of divine Grace will be part of our Work in Heaven. It is said of those

those that *die in the Lord, that their Works follow them, or follow with them, i. e. as some gloss; Rev. xiv. their Works go along with them; are continued in*^{13.} the other World: *They rest indeed from their Labours, from a great deal of their Work on Earth, and from the Toil and Trouble of all of it; but part of their Work here will remain so hereafter. As for Instance, here we contemplate God: This we shall do in Heaven, though with more Success and Satisfaction. Now we know in part, then that* 1 Cor. xiii. *which is in part shall be done away: Now we see* 9, 10, 11. *through a Glass darkly, then Face to Face, we shall see him as he is, and know as we are known. There will be no Study indeed in Heaven, such as our present distant imperfect State needs; but I presume, there will be still Enquiry: For if the Angels pry and look into divine Things, for the further Improvement and Satisfaction of their Minds, as the Apostle intimates they do, 1 Pet. i. 12. why should we think the Saints will be above Searches of this Nature?*

Farther, here 'tis part of our Work to resign ourselves to God, subject ourselves to him; endeavouring to bring our Hearts under the Awe and Influence of his Authority. This is often done by us, if Christians, with great Seriousness and Solemnity; and yet, after all, 'tis so imperfectly done, that we still find Cause to do it over again, and again: Now the same will be our Work in Heaven, tho' performed with more Success. Self-Subjection is now our *Desire*, then our *Attainment*, our habitual State and Frame, which yet hinders not a constant, *actual* Resignation: And how great the Pleasure of this devout Persons may conjecture, from what they find and feel in the present, imperfect Degrees of it. "A Soul, says * one, * How's
"formed into an obediential subject Frame (*viz.* *Blessed. Rigb*
p. 158.

“ to God) What sweet Peace does it enjoy? Every thing rests most composedly in its proper Place; a Bone out of Joint knows no Ease, nor lets the Body enjoy any: The Creature is not in its Place, but when it is thus subject, is in Subordination to God: By flying out of this Subordination, the World of Mankind is become one great disjointed Body; full of weary Tossings, unacquainted with Ease or Rest: That Soul, that is but in a Degree reduced to that blessed State and Temper, is, as it were, in a new World: So great and happy a Change does it now feel in itself. But when this Transformation shall be compleated in it, and the Will of God shall be no sooner known than rested in, with a complacential Approbation; and every Motion of the first and great Mover shall be an *efficacious Law*, to guide and determine all our Motions; and the lesser Wheels shall presently run at the first Impulse of the great and Master Wheel, without the least Rub or Hesitation: When the Law of Sin shall no longer check the Law of God; when all the Contentions of a rebellious Flesh, all the Counterstrivings of a perverse, ungovernable Heart shall cease for ever; Oh! Unconceivable Blessedness of this Consent, the Pleasure of this joyful Harmony, this peaceful Accord!” This a Christian is aspiring after here on Earth: This he is essaying and attempting, though with great Disappointment. Well, in Heaven he will be employed the same Way; only without the Reluctancy and Opposition of a carnal Mind: He is now *resigning*, then he shall be *resigned*. He, now says, Lord, *I wou’d be thine*; then he can say, *I am thine, fully thine*; all former Enmity being removed, and the Heart wrought up to an unreserved absolute

absolute Subjection and Obedience to the great God. This, O my Soul! is the Work of Heaven; here the Joy of Heaven.

Farther, It is our Work here to love God, to delight in him: And surely this will not cease in Heaven; the *Apostle* assures us of the contrary, *1 Cor xiii. 8.* Love is an heavenly Grace, and the Exercise of it will be the Business of Heaven; *will be Heaven.* “* Love, says the forementioned * *Ib. p. 162.*
“ great Author, is an eminent part of the Likeness of God in his Saints: It is an Excellency, consider’d either in its Original, or Copy, made up of *Pleasantness*. Love to a Friend is not without high Delight; especially when he is present and enjoyed. Love to a Saint riseth higher in Nobleness and Pleasure. It is now in its highest Improvement, in both these Aspects of it. Now does the Soul take up its stated dwelling in Love, even in God who is Love; and as he is Love, it is now enclos’d and encompass’d with Love, conversant in the proper Region and Element of Love; the Love of God is now perfected in him; that Love, which casts out tormenting Fear: So that here is Pleasure without Mixture. How naturally will the blessed Soul now dissolve and melt in Pleasure; it is now framed on purpose for Love-Embraces and Enjoyments; It shall now love like God, as one composed of Love; it shall no longer be its Complaint and Burden, that it cannot retaliate in this Kind; that being beloved, it cannot love.” Love, as it includes high Estimation and a Reverence of God, steady Adherence to him, a delightful View of his Perfections and Excellencies; an approving, with Applause, his Providences, Government, and all his Ways; this, I doubt
not,

not, will be the Soul's Exercise in Heaven; it will almost lose itself, as I may say, in the Contemplation of these Things; for ever admiring the Wisdom and Excellency of the Author. Here, O my Soul! will be thy Heaven; hence Joy unspeakable, and glorified.

Again, Here we are often employed in Worship; which indeed is the most noble, honourable Service we are capable of; the Glory and Distinction of our Nature. *All thy Works shall praise thee, thy Saints shall bless thee.* And we need not question, this shall continue our Work in Heaven: Hence Heaven is called a Church. And John, in his Vision, represents the Members thereof, as *not resting Night nor Day, Saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty; as casting the Crowns before the Throne, and worshipping him that lives for ever and ever.* They agnize and acknowledge his Perfections, giving him the Glory of his Attributes, Providences, Grace, &c. And how delightful may we suppose their Worship? how entertaining to the Mind? There's no Pleasure on Earth like that of Worship; even now, when the Heart is in Frame, in our low manner: But then it will be always so, and much more so; the Object ever present; the Mind fill'd with the Glories of it; and all the Faculties exerted in the inwards Acts of Love, Praise, Resignation, &c. and these, it may be, outwardly expressed, in a Way suitable to that State. Let me only add, that as the Imperfection of all our Services and Worship shall be done away; so such Service as, in this Life, imply Imperfection, shall cease then: There will be no Confession or Contrition; no Humiliation in *Paradise*. All Work of this Nature is calculated for the present Meridian; a State

Psal. cxlv.
10.

Heb. xii.
23.
Rev. iv.
8, 10.

State of Sin and Sorrow. Here *we sow in Tears*, but there *we shall reap in Joy*. Our present Complaints shall be turned into Songs of Praise, and our Notes of Grief into triumphant Hallelujahs !

Again, I doubt not we shall be employd in mutual Converse with our Fellow Saints ; and it's probable with the *Angels* too ; comparing Notes with one another ; conversing sometimes with the *Patriarchs* and *Prophets* ; sometimes with the *Apostles* and *Martyrs* ; sometimes with our old dear Friends and Acquaintances ; Ministers, Christian Brethren, &c. discoursing with them of former Passages here on Earth, as well as of the present Enjoyments of Heaven. This, O my Soul ! and such like, will be thy Business in the other World, in the Paradise of God : Thou wilt, 'tis probable, be everlastingly employed in some such Way as this. And was there nothing more, methinks, this alone wou'd be enough of itself to create a *Paradise* !

What Pleasure do we sometimes find now in the Work of God ? in any little Service that we have Reason to think is accepted of God ; and in which we have the Testimony of Conscience, that it is well design'd ? How grateful is Praise and Prayer even with Fasting and Tears, if the Heart be engaged ? If God touch our Tongue with a Coal from his Altar, how ready to cry out, on such Encouragement, Here am I, send me ; even though the Errand itself be difficult and ungrateful ? But, O the Pleasure of Heaven ! How great the Joy and Delight of our Work there ! when we shall never miscarry in it ; never have an uncomfortable Reflection upon it ; never suffer the Reproach of Conscience, as having been careless or unfaithful.

In

In a Word, when every Service will be perform'd with perfect Integrity and all suitable Affection; and God himself present therein, crowning all with his Favour and Smiles. Oh! may I be better acquainted with this Work here on Earth; and may it be my everlasting Work in Heaven!

A Fourth Meditation on HEAVEN.

6thly, **T**Here's *the Pleasure of the beatifick Vision*, as it is generally called; that is, of seeing and enjoying God. What this includes at present, we know not: But the Scripture not only signifies that *we shall see him*, but that there is a Felicity and Happiness wrap'd up in it. We shall have such a Sight of the divine Being, as will transform the Soul into its Likeness; *we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is*. The clear, distinct, more immediate View we shall have of the blessed God in *Paradise*, will powerfully impress and transform the Mind; leave upon it the very Image of the Object: And who can tell how much it will raise, entertain and delight? When *Moses* had that Interview with God in the Mount; was admitted into his nearer Presence; 'tis said, *his Face shone*; there was an heavenly Lustre, some Rays of Divinity derived to him; insomuch, that he was forced to *put on a Veil*, when he conversed with the People. Nor is it an improbable Conjecture, that this extraordinary Manifestation of God to him was a Means of sustaining and supporting his Spirits, through his Fast of forty Days. He had then Meat to eat that the World knew not of; *the Joy of the Lord* was his *Strength*; which, for that time, set him so far above the Necessities of the Body, that he subsisted without Food

1 John iii.
2.

Ex. xxxiv.
30, 35.

Food or Sleep. And, O my Soul! will not the Presence of God in Heaven, fully, immediately, and for ever enjoyed, have a more glorious Influence? How delightful is that short Taste of the divine Presence, holy Men are now and then favoured with here on Earth? How do they triumph in it? If he *lift up the Light of his Countenance upon them*, they are ready to pity, I had almost said, insult the poor Worlding. But oh! the Pleasures of *Paradise*, when we shall dwell in his Presence for ever; never more complain of an interposing Cloud, or suffer an Eclipse; but have his Light and Favour filling the Mind, and invigorating every Faculty. This, O my Soul! is Heaven; *in his Presence is Fulness of Joy.* —xvi. ult.

7thly, There is *the Pleasure of being with Christ*; of conversing and enjoying our glorified Redeemer: This we may with Confidence expect: *Where I am, there shall my Servant be.* And again, *Father, I will, that they whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my Glory which thou hast given me.* We shall see him in his exalted State, in his glorious Resurrection-Body: See him upon his Throne, incircled with Angels, and worshipping Saints; receiving the Honour, and Marks of Distinction due to him. And who can estimate the Pleasure of this? “Was I only admitted, says one, to look in
“within the Veil, and behold my Lord surrounded with all his Glory, it would be a marvellous
“Consolation to me, though I were sure never
“to partake of it.” But granting this to be too high a Flight, we may be certain the View of his Glory, with Interest and Participation, will greatly entertain. When *Peter* had a short Specimen of it in the Mount, he cries out, *It is good to be here.* Shall we not much more say thus of Heaven,
—xvii. ult.

ven, when we behold his fuller Glory, and are admitted to converse with him in that Glory; yea, are glorified with him? It may be we shall hear Christ himself commenting upon his own Work; displaying the Wonders of his Grace and Love. However, we shall see the Work finished; see him possessed of the Joy that was once set before him, share with him in that Joy. *Enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord. Shall sit down with him in his Throne of Glory.*

Mat. xxv.
21.
Rev. iii. 21.

8thly, There's the Pleasure of reviewing and looking back upon the former State. This, no question, will be an Ingredient in Heaven, and contribute to the Happiness of it: Son, remember says Abraham to the rich Man in Hell. In the other World they will remember past Transactions. The Saints will remember, with unspeakable Affection and devout Resentment, the former Things, in their Ignorance, Enmity, and Distance from God; before he called them by his Grace: Remember the Sin, Folly, and Danger of their unconverted State; the Methods of divine Providence and Grace in recovering them to himself: Remember the Admonitions, Warnings, Convictions they had, and the blessed Issue of all at last. With what Transport will they be ready to say as the Apostle, *I was before a Blasphemer, Injurious, a Drunkard, a Swearer, Carnal, Earthly, sensual, a Companion of Fools, &c. but I obtained Mercy: In me God shewed forth all Long-suffering and Patience. And Oh! how will this strike their Affections, excite their Love, Praise, and Gratitude; make them cast down their Crowns before the Throne, and fill them with Admiration and Joy for ever! They'll remember the Difficulties and Trials they passed through; the Temptations and Tears that beset them: Remember their Praying, Weeping,*

Luke xvi.
25.

1 Tim. i.
3.

Weeping, Fasting, their Conflicts and Fears; their Supports, Reliefs, Deliverances; and for ever adore the Wisdom, Mercy, and Grace of Providence in its Conduct towards them. In short, all the Scenes of Life will often open before their Eyes; they'll remember what they were, where they were; view themselves upon the Precipices from whence they were so often saved, and seasonably rescued; even *snatch'd as Firebrands out of the Fire.* Oh! my Soul! how grateful this Remembrance, how entertaining? It will not only supply thy Songs, but increase thy Joys, and give a Relish to the other Delights of *Paradise.*

Nor is it unfit to suppose there will be a Comparison between the former Condition and State on Earth, and the present happy State and Frame in Heaven. Thou wilt, O my Soul! be apt thus to reason with thy self. “ * I that did sometimes bear” *How, 178.*

“ the accursed Image of the Prince of Darkness,
 “ do now partake of the holy, pure Nature of the
 “ Father of Lights. I was a meer *Chaos*, an hideous heap of Deformity, Confusion, and Darkness: But he that made Light to shine out of
 “ Darkness, shin'd into me, to give the Knowledge of his own Glory, in the Face of Jesus
 “ Christ; and since has made my way as the shining Light, shining brighter and brighter unto
 “ this perfect Day. I was a Habitation for Dragons;
 “ a Cage of noisom Lusts: after I began to live
 “ the spiritual new Life, how slow and faint was my
 “ Progress towards Perfections? How indisposed
 “ did I find my self to the proper Actions of that
 “ Life? To go about any spiritual Work was, too
 “ often, as to climb an Hill, or strive against the
 “ Stream; or as an Attempt to fly without Wings:
 “ How listless to these Things! How lifeless in
 “ them! Impressions made, how quickly lost!

Q

“ Gracious

“ Gracious Frames, how soon wrought off and
 “ gone! Characters of Glory rased out, and over-
 “ spread with Earth and Dirt! But, O my Soul!
 “ divine Comeliness hath, *now at length*, made thee
 “ perfect: The Glory of God doth now cloath
 “ me; they are his Ornaments I wear: He hath
 “ now perfectly master’d the Enmity of my Heart;
 “ I am all Spirit and Life. I feel myself disbur-
 “ dened and unclog’d of all the heavy, oppressive
 “ Weights that hung upon me; no Body of
 “ Death doth now incumber me, no Deadness of
 “ Heart; no Coldness of Love; no Aversion from
 “ God; no sensual Inclinations or Affections; no
 “ sinful Division of Heart between God and the
 “ Creatures; he hath now the whole of me; I en-
 “ joy and delight in none but him. O blessed
 “ Change! O happy Day! This is that I longed
 “ and labour’d for; which I prayed and waited
 “ for; which I so earnestly breathed after, and
 “ restlessly pursued. What would * I once have
 “ given for a steady, abiding Frame of Holi-
 “ ness? for an Heart constantly bent and bias’d
 “ towards God? constantly serious, constantly
 “ tendered, lively, watchful, heavenly, spiritual,
 “ meek, humble, cheerful, self-denying? How
 “ have I cried, striven for this, to get such an
 “ Heart, such a Temper of Spirit. And now,
 “ O my Soul! thy Desires are crown’d and ac-
 “ complish’d; thou *now fully art what thou once*
 “ *fain wou’dst have been.*

* Ib. p. 184.

In this manner, we may suppose, the Soul in
 Heaven will review its former, and contemplate its
 present self; comparing the one with the other;
 present Light and former Darkness; present Puri-
 ty, Brightness, Life, with former Enmity, Cor-
 ruption and Dross; surveying the Conduct of so-
 vereign Wisdom and Grace, approving and ap-
 plauding

plauding every Step of Providence, and recanting former Censures. Oh! Now I see, says the Soul, the kind Design of my God and Father in his severe (as I once thought them) Dispensations towards me; now I see God is true to his Word; all Things *have* wrought together for Good; what he was doing *once*, I understood not; but *now* I know: *To the King eternal, immortal, be Honour and Glory, for ever and ever.* This, O my Soul! will be part of thy Heaven, one of the Streams of *Paradise*, where thou wilt bathe and refresh thyself for ever!

9thly, There are *several additional Pleasures*, which will accrue to the Saints after the Resurrection, and *in the final State*; partly introductory to their Happiness, and partly constitutive of it; as the Coming of the Lord in his *Schechinah* and Glory: They now *love his appearing*; Then ^{2 Tim. iv. 8.} they shall enjoy it, and triumph in it; when he appears, they *shall appear with him in Glory.* He ^{Col. iii. 4.} shall descend from Heaven with a Shout, with the ^{1 Thes. iv. 16.} Voice of the Arch-Angel, and with the Trump of God, &c. and he will bring them with him. He will come *in the Clouds*, and every Eye shall see him. But, Oh! the Transports and Extasies of Joy this will occasion to his Redeemed, saved Ones. Farther, There is the Pleasure and Comfort of the Resurrection-Body, with all its Ornaments and Beauty; of the future Judgment, the Process of that solemn Day, in which the Saints shall be first acquitted, and then be Assessors with their Lord, viewing and applauding the Wisdom and Equity of his Proceedings; and sealing, as I may say, his Sentence with their *Amen.* — There is the Pleasure of their solemn Inthronement and Coronation; after which *they enter into* ^{Mat. xxv. 21.} *the Joy of their Lord.*

1othly, and lastly, all this Felicity is *eternal*:
 They have an eternal *Paradise*; as they have an
 2 Cor. iv. exceeding, so an eternal *Weight of Glory*. The In-
 17. heritance there is *undefiled*, and *fadeth not away*.
 1 Pet. i. 4. Here our Joys are but a Taste: And yet how
 transient? If we have a little of Heaven in our
 Frame, and it pleaseth God now and then to
 shine upon the Soul with Light and Comfort,
 how soon is it over? If we get upon the Mount,
 we must presently come down again; mix with
 the World, feel its Vanity and Sorrow: But in
Paradise there will be no Vicissitudes, no Change
 of State or Frame; no Loss or Diminution of
 Happiness; the Gulf is fixed, and the State eter-
 Pfal. xvi. nal: *At thy Right Hand are Pleasures for ever-*
 ult. *more.*

And this, O my Soul! is Heaven; this is *Pa-*
radise, i. e. this is Part of it; Part of the Joy
 and Blessedness thou art waiting and hoping for:
 It is a Part, I say, though but a small, a very
 small Part: There are *unspeakable Words*, incon-
 ceivable, unutterable Glories belonging to that
 World, which even an Angel *may not, cannot* un-
 fold to us: If thou art so happy as to arrive there
 at last, and be one of the Possessors, thou wilt
 find thyself agreeably surprized, and have reason
 to say, with the Queen of *Sheba*, *It was a true*
Report that I heard in mine own Land; though I
believed not the Words, &c. heard on Earth; true
 as to the Substance of this Blessedness; but be-
 1 Kings x. hold, *the half was not told me*. Lord, help me to
 6, 7. believe the Words, and may I come, and my Eyes
see it!

A Fifth Meditation on HEAVEN.

HOW glorious a State this ! Who would not say, *Let thy Servant depart in Peace, and see thy Salvation ?* But let me a little examine the Evidences of it. These are not vain Words, they are my Life ; here is my Hope and Happiness, my All : And it infinitely concerns me to be on sure Grounds. I shall therefore stop a while, and review the Arguments that may assist and establish my Faith herein. Now that there is a State of After-Blessedness ; such a State as has been described here, called *Paradise*, may appear from three Sorts of Arguments ; rational, divine, and sensible. I shall begin with the first, the rational, or moral Arguments. And,

1st, It may be argued from the Nature and Excellency of the human Soul, which is a spiritual, immaterial Substance ; we feel in our selves something that understands, reasons, and wills ; which can act spontaneously ; can chuse and refuse, and is the Subject of various Passions ; as Love, Hope, * Fear, Desire, Grief, Joy, &c. All which are so different from all the Properties of Matter, which we are acquainted with, that we must conclude they have a Subject essentially different from Matter. It was never yet proved, nor I presume can be proved, that Matter is † capable of Thought : if any pretend it may be refined to that Degree, as to be capable of thinking ; it is enough to say, all the Matter we know

Q 3

of

* Vid. *Sherlock* on the Immortality of the Soul and future State, p. 50, &c.

† Several have undertaken to demonstrate, that Matter is not capable of Thought. An ingenious Attempt to this Purpose may be seen in Mr. *Ditton* on the Resurrection of Christ, in the *Appendix*.

of is wholly lifeless and inactive, can neither move it self nor think. Consequently we may infer, that the thinking Principle within us is distinct from Matter : And this affords a good Argument of the Soul's Immortality. If it be not Matter or Body, it dies not with the Body : All material Compositions, such as human Bodies are, may be dissolved by the Separation of their Parts ; but that which has no Parts, no Extension, is incorruptible, it cannot be dissolved by any natural Cause ; it may indeed be annihilated by the Will and Power of God, from whence it had its first Being. But when God has created an immortal Nature, that nothing can destroy but his own immediate Power ; as it is an absolute Security against a natural Death and Dissolution, so it is an Argument God never intends to annihilate it.

2dly, Add to this the excellent Capacities and Powers of the Soul : How admirable, how divine, and even *God like* a Being is the human Mind ? Whoever views it in its several Faculties ; as Understanding, Will, Memory, &c. must own it designed for Immortality : To which

3dly, I may subjoin, that the Souls of good Men are in a State of Improvement, continually advancing towards Perfection ; they are pressing forward towards the Mark. If the Christian compare himself at fifty or sixty with what he was at fifteen or twenty, how great ordinarily, the Difference ! * And even when the Body decays, and its Pleasures become insipid, the Soul is often in the most flourishing State. Wisdom, Counsel, Piety, and Devotion, are the Glory of Age. And shall we imagine, that after the Soul has attain'd to the greatest State of Improvement it can in the Body, it shall fall into Nothing ? Does not this look

* *Sherlock,*
Ibid.

look rather like a State of Probation and Trial for another Life?

4^{thly}, It is an Argument to the same Purpose, that good Men find, in themselves, ardent Desires after Immortality; indeed, *these Desires* are universal, planted in the Minds of all Mankind. It is shocking to human Nature to think of *losing all Being*; and after a few Years of such a Life as this in the Body, be reduced to nothing: But in good Men these Desires are more steady and vigorous. *We that are in this Tabernacle*, says the ²Cor. v. 4. Apostle, *do groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon—that Mortality may be swallowed up of Life*. And shall we suppose that God will defeat the Expectations he is the Author of? That he has wrought into our very Nature a strong and powerful Principle in vain, and to no Purpose; which, with respect to good Men especially, only serves to delude and cheat them?

5^{thly}, The governing Wisdom and Justice * of God requires there should be a State of After-Retribution: It is certain these Perfections are not sufficiently display'd; do not appear in their proper Lustre and Glory, in the present Administration of Things: And indeed, if we look no farther than this World; there lie Objections against them, not easily to be removed. What would be thought of a Prince, who, in the usual Course of his Government, distinguisheth his worst Subjects (habitual Enemies to publick Peace, and Rebels to their Sovereign) with Honours, Preferments, and all possible Marks of Favour; whilst the peaceable, virtuous, and good, are not only overlook'd, but left to be insulted? Could he be thought a wise Governor? Would he not rather

Q 4

fall

* I resume some Things touch'd before, that the main Heads of Evidence being collected, and shewn in one View, may appear in their greater Strength.

fall under Contempt and Censure, as proceeding contrary to all the Maxims of Equity and Prudence? and shall we impute this to the blessed God, which would be a Reproach to a Creature, that has but a Shadow of his Excellency and Perfection? And yet, if there be no other State, I see not how we shall be able to vindicate his Government; how it is possible to account for the Methods of present Providence towards Good and Bad, without taking in future Prospects, and allowing future Rewards and Punishments. How often do we see that the best Men have the hardest Measures in this Life? the great Apostle, *St. Paul*, was a Prisoner bound with a Chain, whilst *Nero*, vile to a Proverb, was an Emperor sitting upon his Throne: The Sensualist in the Parable, we find *cloathed in Purple and fine Linen*; whilst the Saint, dear to God, and the Care of Angels, *lay at his Gate full of Sores*. And thus it has always been more or less: *They are the Ungodly*, saith the Psalmist, *who prosper in the World, that increase in Riches*. But as for himself he complains, *Ver. 14. That he was plagued all the Day, and chastened every Morning*. And what Conclusion must we make from hence? That there is no God, no Providence; or that God is not Holy, Wise, Just and Good? No, the Inference is only this (and how well is it grounded?) that God will judge the Righteous and the Wicked; that verily there is a Reward for the Righteous; that there is another World, a better State to come, a *Paradise*; and that *the Upright shall have Dominion in the Morning*.

This, O my Soul! thou mayest be assured of, from the Consideration both of thy own Nature, and the Nature of God. Thou art too excellent a Being to die away, and perish for ever, after a
few

few Moments of faint Life here ; the God that made thee designed thee for farther and higher Things: This thou mayest infer from thy own Frame, and from the State of his present Government. Not that I have Demonstration from natural Light and Evidence. For what Occasion then for Faith? what Room for the Exercise of that Grace? But I have the highest Degree of Probability and moral Assurance; and such as, considering the Weight of the Subject, the Importance of eternal Things, challengeth my utmost Regard: The *Atheist* cannot so much as pretend to prove there is no After-State, no Heaven. I have Proof, not only that there *may be* such a State, but that it is *most highly probable*. Consequently, to neglect it, and prefer this World to it, would be the utmost Folly and Madness. But,

2dly, I have not only moral and probable Arguments for *Paradise*, but divine Arguments, as I take leave to call them; that is, express Scripture-Revelation, which carries the Matter farther, and makes it certain. One can't reasonably imagine, that the human Spirit is mortal: But after all, it must be granted, that we know so little of the Nature and Philosophy of the Soul, that our best Security for its future Subsistence, is from the holy Scriptures. “ * All our Enquiries, says the Lord

“ *Verulam*, about the Nature of the reasonable
 “ Soul, must be bound over, at last, to Religion,
 “ there to be determined and defined; for otherwise they still lie open to many Errors, and Illusions of Sense. For seeing the Substance of
 “ the Soul was not deduced and extracted in her
 “ Creation, from the Mass of Heaven and Earth,
 “ but immediately inspired from God; and seeing the Laws of Heaven and Earth are the proper Subjects of Philosophy; how can the Know-
 “ ledge

• Advance
 of Learning,
lib. 4. c. 3.

“ ledge of the Substance of the reasonable Soul be
 “ derived or fetched from Philosophy? But it must
 “ be drawn from the same Inspiration, from whence
 “ the Substance thereof first flowed.” It is from
 God and his Word that we learn most fully, and
 with greatest Satisfaction, what the Soul is; that
 it is immortal, that it is intended for another State;
 that we learn *what* that State is, and *that* it is.
 And here I find the Testimony so frequent and
 clear, that the Certainty of a future Heaven is e-
 qual to my Certainty of the Truth of Scripture-
 Revelation; if the Bible be true, Heaven is cer-
 tain. Let me therefore briefly examine what it
 says on this Head.

The Revelation to *Adam* is too concise to af-
 ford much Assistance here; but he wanted not
 some Intimations of a State of After-Happiness.
 The Tree of Life in *Paradise*, and indeed *Para-*
dise it self, were Figures of Heaven, as we re-
 mark’d before: The pious *Patriarchs* lived in the
 lively Hope thereof, as the *Apostle* assures us.
 Heb. xi. *Abraham* was not the only Believer that expected
 another and better Country, that look’d for a City
 Ver. 10. *that has Foundations, whose Builder and Maker is*
God. And with what Composure of Mind, and
 Vigour of Faith, does the expiring Patriarch
 Gen. xlix. cry out, *I have waited for thy Salvation, O God?*
 18. It was revealed to the *Jews*, their *Canaan* was a
 Type of Heaven; in the Promise and Possession
 of the one, they had the Assurance of the other.
 The Writtings of the Prophets, especially the
Psalmist, abound with References to it; speaking
 of it as the present Support, and future Felicity
 of the Saints. The Hope of unjust Men shall perish,
 Prov. xi. 7. says Solomon. But the Righteous has Hope in his
 —xiv. 32. Death: In his Death, and beyond it: His Hope
 lives, when that of the unjust Man perisheth.
 And

And 'tis observable, that on this Consideration, the *Psalmist* triumphs over the Wicked in the midst of their Prosperity. He was for a while *Pf. lxxiii.* indeed gravell'd with the Case. In the 17th *Verse* *Ver. 12, 13* we have his Victory: *I went into the Sanctuary of God, then understood I their End.* He cannot mean barely their dying, for Death is common to good and bad: *How dieth the Wise Man?* *Eccl. ii. 16.* *Even as the Fool.* He must intend therefore the different Issues of Death; which *when he went into God's Sanctuary*, and had his Mind there awakened, and his Graces excited and exercised, he clearly understood: *Then* the known, and received Principles of his Religion had their due and proper Influence: Then he view'd the Worldling in slippery Places, on the Precipice; foresaw his Fall and Ruin, with the Deliverance and Triumph of the Saints.

In the *New Testament* this Doctrine fills both Pages, it being the distinguishing Character of that Dispensation; *that it has brought Life and* *Tim. i.* *Immortality to Light.* *I give unto my Sheep,* says ^{10.} *Christ, eternal Life, and they shall never perish.* *John x. 28.* *In my Father's House are many Mansions, I go to* *-- xiv. 2.* *prepare a Place for you.* And again, *Fear not,* *little Flock, it's the Father's good Pleasure to give* *Luke xii.* *you the Kingdom;* there's a Crown, a Crown of ^{32.} *Life, which God, as righteous Judge, will give.* Both Testaments abundantly confirm this. O my Soul! here thou hast a sure Word of Prophecy to found and direct thy Faith: This State of After-Happiness is what God has spoken of, *by the Mouth of all his Prophets, since the World began.* And thou hast the farther Testimony of the great *Amen*, the faithful and true Witness: Here therefore thou mayest fix thy Foot, with full Assurance of Faith, rejoicing in Hope of the Glory of God, A

*A Sixth Meditation on the same
Subject.*

3dly, **I** TOOK Notice, that there are also *sensible* Arguments and Evidences of this Truth: We have such Discoveries of Heaven, and of a future glorious *Paradise*, as our Senses are capable, in some Measure, of taking in, and thereby of assisting Faith. As,

1st, We have the Testimony of one of the Inhabitants of *Paradise*, who came from thence, and has given us Assurance concerning it, I mean the Son of God: *He was in the Beginning with God. Had a Glory with the Father, before the World was. He came forth from God, came down from Heaven. He was made Flesh, and dwelt among us: And whilst he did so, bore frequent Testimony concerning the heavenly Paradise. It was indeed the great Subject of his Sermons, as*

John i. 1.
—xvii. 5.
—xxvi. 28
Ver. 38.

—xiv. 2.

Mat. viii.
19, 20.

might be shewn: That is most express. *In my Father's House are many Mansions; he adds, if it were not so, I would have told you: As if he had said, "I never yet deceived you; but upon all Occasions have dealt faithfully with you; let you know what you must expect, The Foxes have Holes (says he) and the Birds of the Air have Nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his Head, have warned you of your Dangers, Temptations, Sufferings; and I would not impose upon you in the greatest Concern of all; no; you may depend upon my Word; Heaven is sure: In my Father's House there are many Mansions."*

I may add, he continued his Testimony to the last: With how much Assurance does he speak of that

that World, when just leaving this? Thus, to the Thief on the Cross, *This Day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.* And when expiring himself, 43. *Father, (says he) into thy Hands I commend my Spirit,* he renewed his Testimony, when in *Paradise*; not only by the *Spirit* in his Apostles, but immediately by himself: As to *John* frequently in his Revelation; particularly in that known Passage. *I heard a Voice from Heaven, saying, Blessed are the Dead.* And, O my Soul! how sure, and even sensible the Evidence from hence; here's one of the Possessors of *Paradise* giving Testimony to it; a Person of the most glorious Character and greatest Credibility; who spoke what he knew, and had seen, and his Testimony is true.

2dly, Several, in our World, have conversed and had Interviews with the stated Inhabitants of that World: For Instance, after the *Lord Christ's* Ascension into Heaven, *John* saw him, *Rev. i. 13.* The Apostle *Paul*, saw him in his way to *Damascus.* He saw the *Just One*, and heard the Words of his Mouth. *Stephen* also saw him; he looked stedfastly up to Heaven, and saw the Glory of God, and *Jesus* standing at his right Hand. He saw the *Schechinah*, or bright shining Cloud, in which the divine Majesty used to appear to the Church of Old: This he saw in *Paradise*; where also was *Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant*, in a conspicuous Glory: He saw him in his exalted State. I add the Apostles, *Peter, James,* and *John* saw *Moses* and *Elias*, two Residents of Heaven, on the Mount of Transfiguration, *Matt. xvii. 3.*

3dly, Some of our World have been visibly taken up to *Paradise*, as *Enoch* and *Elias*, which I reckon a sensible Evidence of another State; especially when many

Acts i. 9,
10.

many Ages after, one of them made his Appearance upon the Earth, as in the Transfiguration. So Christ ascended before many Witnesses. *He was taken up to Heaven* in the Presence of his Disciples, they gazing after him; and, as I before observed, some on Earth saw him there, heard him speak from thence.

4thly, We have an Instance of one caught up out of our World into that other World (I mean the great Apostle St. *Paul*, as in the Text) who afterwards lived, and conversed on Earth many Years, bearing Testimony to the Truth and Certainty of *Paradise*, displaying its Excellencies and Comforts, recommending it to the Choice of others; and by incessant Labour and Pains endeavouring to promote the Interest of it: Indeed he had not Leave to draw a Map of the heavenly *Canaan*, and fully represent what he saw; but how frequently and affectionately does he speak of it? How full of Heaven his Writings and Conversation? Bonds, Imprisonments, nothing moved him, *so he might finish his Course with Joy*. He zealously served his God, in *Hope of eternal Life*. Was ready to be offered up, willing to spend and be spent; and all from the View of *Paradise*, the Prospect of a *Crown of Righteousness at that Day*. And how much Weight ought this Testimony to have with us? It is impossible, considering his Character and Station while a *Pharisee*; the Circumstances of his Conversion; his Conduct afterwards in the whole Course of his Ministry; his Sufferings and Patience in the Cause of God; his Contempt of this World, and Regard to another: It is impossible, I say, considering these Things with Reason, to suspect him of Fraud; we can neither question that he was in *Paradise*, nor that what he says of *Paradise* is true.

—xx. 24.

Tit. i. 1, 2.

2 Tim. iv.
8.

5thly, We

5thly, We have frequent Messengers from that World to ours: To say nothing of the Apparitions of departed Spirits, the Ministry of Angels is an Instance of this Kind, and a Proof of another State: *They are all ministring Spirits, sent forth to minister for the Heirs of Salvation.* And Heb. i. ult. how often have they appear'd visibly, and had sensible Intercourse with Mankind? speaking to them, and conversing with them. And though this is not now so common as heretofore, yet still they continue their Office and Correspondence with us; and consequently, are a standing Evidence of *Paradise*, as their visible Appearance is a sensible Evidence of it.

6thly, God has been pleased to manifest something of Heaven in the Souls of devout Men, affording them a Specimen of the After-Glory; a Foretaste of the Joys of *Paradise*. The Apostles had some Experience of this, when present with Christ at his Transfiguration; they not only saw a sensible *Schechinah* and Glory, but felt a Glory in their own Minds, a little Heaven within. Hence *Peter* cries out, *It is good to be here; let us build three Tabernacles.* Mat. xvii. 4. And how many are there, who in their more solemn, serious Frame, have found the like Entertainment? If they have not been wrap'd up to *Paradise*, *Paradise* has been brought down to them. Lord, stay thy Hand, says one, I am an earthen Vessel. I am as full of Heaven, says another, as I can hold in this lower State. "Oh! that
" I could let you know, says the Seraphick Mr.
" *John Janeway* on his Death-Bed, what I now
" feel; that I could shew you what I now see;
" I would not for a World, for a Million of
" Worlds be without a Christ, and a Pardon, I
" would not for a World live any longer, the very
" Thoughts of a Possibility of a Recovery make
me

“ me tremble; I now see something of the invisible World; I now feel something of it. How long, dear Lord, come Lord Jesus, come quickly, why are his Chariot Wheels so long a coming.”

And what shall we say to the Passage Mr. *Flavel* relates? of the Truth of which he tells us he had very good Assurance. And no wonder, when I doubt not, he knew the Man, as the Apostle did him, that *was caught up to the third Heaven*. The Substance of the Story is this: “ As the Person he means was travelling alone, he resolv’d to make the best Improvement he could of his Solitude; accordingly he set himself seriously to meditate upon divine Subjects, and particularly the Life to come, and the manner of the Soul’s Existence hereafter: After a while, he perceived his Thoughts begin to fix, and come closer to these great and astonishing Things, than usual, and his Affections to rise with proportionable Life and Vigour. And perceiving himself in this extraordinary Frame, he did whilst Master of himself, lift up his Heart to God, and beg he might meet with no Interruption that Day; which was granted him. And thus going on, his Thoughts began to swell higher and higher, like the Water in *Ezekiel’s* Vision, till at last they became an overflowing Flood: Such was the Intenseness of his Mind; such the ravishing Tastes of heavenly Joys, and such his full Assurance of his Interest therein, that he utterly lost all Sight and Sense of this World, and the Concernments thereof: and for some Hours knew not where he was, nor what he was about: But having lost a great Quantity of Blood at the Nose, he found himself so faint, that it brought him a little more to himself: And after he had washed

“ washed himself at a Spring, and drunk of the
“ Water for his Refreshment, he continued to the
“ End of his Journey, which was thirty Miles;
“ and all this while was scarce sensible; and says,
“ he had several Trances of considerable Con-
“ tinuance. The same blessed Frame was pre-
“ served all that Night, and, in a lower Degree,
“ great part of the next Day: The Night passed
“ without one Wink of Sleep; and yet he de-
“ clares, he never had a sweeter Night's Rest in
“ all his Life. Still, adds the Story, *The Joy of*
“ *the Lord overflowed him*, and he seem'd to be
“ an Inhabitant of another World. I shall only
“ take Notice, that he used for many Years af-
“ ter to call that Day, *One of the Days of Heaven*,
“ and profess'd he understood more of the Life of
“ Heaven by it, than by all the Books he ever read,
“ or Discourses he ever entertain'd about it.”

Now here was Heaven upon Earth: And tho' this was extraordinary, some lesser Degree of the like Intercourse with Heaven, other good Men have experienced. It pleaseth God now and then to unveil his Glory; to grant us in this Wilderness a Cluster of Grapes from the promised Land, as a Pledge, Earnest, and Foretaste of the full Inheritance.

And these are some of the Evidences for another World, of the Truth and Certainty of *Paradise*. God has not only reveal'd it in Nature, in his Word, but *even in our Senses*; not but that there is still Occasion for the Exercise of Faith; the Truth of Scripture-History is supposed, and the Veracity of those who report what they have seen or felt: But this being granted, and it has all the Proof Things of this Nature are capable of; the Evidence is, I say, *sensible*. Suppose the Question be (and we know it has been disputed) whether any of the

R

Stars

Stars and Planets are inhabited: Some deny, others affirm; others think it only probable: In the midst of the Debate a Person appears, that came from one of these (supposed) Worlds, who had lived there; and affirms that it is inhabited; that he had seen and convers'd with the Inhabitants thereof, and such and such was the State of their Affairs. Suppose also some of our World had found a Passage thither, return'd from thence, and confirm'd the same thing; who sees not that this wou'd put an End to the Controversy? Were the Witnesses credible, Persons of Reputation and Character, their Testimony wou'd supersede all farther Enquiries, silence Objectors, and remove Suspicions. And such are the Witnesses concern'd in the present Case; here are several who have been in *Paradise*, convers'd there, some of them stated Residents of that World, who came from thence, appear'd and lived amongst us; all Persons of the highest Credibility, and all agreeing in their Reports of *Paradise*. And how many devout Souls are there on Earth, that live in the Views of that World; that keep up a frequent Correspondence with it, essaying its Work, foretasting its Rewards, as a sensible Pledge of what remains: So that all sorts of Arguments concur to the Evidence of another World, another better State. O my Soul! how sure the Foundation of thy Faith. Alas! that it is so weak! attended with so many Jealousies and Fears. *Lord, I believe, help my Unbelief*; shine on my Mind; favour me with more of the blessed Prelibations of that World: Thou hast told me of a future Heaven, and on thy Testimony I rely; into that I resolve my Faith. But as thou hast been pleased, in great Condescension to the Weakness and Infirmities of thy Servants, sometimes to unveil thy Glory, and bring it down to their Senses, I wou'd
thankfully

thankfully receive, and improve these Instances of thy Goodness: May I, by *inward Sensation*, know and feel more of thy Heaven, and with *Patience wait for it*.

A Seventh Meditation on HEAVEN.

The INSTRUCTION.

IS there such various and strong Evidence for another State, a *Paradise*? Applica-
tion.

1st, How unreasonable the Cause of Infidelity, and how inexcusable those that espouse it! We have the Testimony of God himself, that cannot lye, that will not, need not deceive us: That there is an Heaven, our own Reason gives the utmost Encouragement to expect it; nay, our Senses assist and confirm our Faith: And yet all this will not satisfy; there are still found Objectors; some that call it in question, and some that expressly deny it; and this under the specious Pretence of acting with more Caution and Reason than others. They gravely tell us, they are not for believing in the Dark; they cannot resign to Authorities, and take Things upon Trust. But how shameful, not to say impudent, this Pretence? how injurious the Insinuation? As if the Christian had no Evidence or Reason to support his Faith; and on that Account only they rejected it: When really, whatever they assume, they themselves are guilty of what they charge upon others; believing without Reason. They are, excuse the Expression, *the most resolute Believers*; believe thro' more Embarrassments and greater Difficulties, than any attend the Christian Faith. This might be made appear beyond all Contradiction, by com-

paring the Creed of these Infidels with that of the Christian. For Instance they believe, *That this World either was not made at all, or was made by Chance; by a fortuitous Concourse of Atoms. They believe that the Sun, the Stars, and all those stupendous Systems came by Chance. That the admirable Fabrick of the human Body was formed without Contrivance, or Design, and fell together by Chance. They believe that all the Operations of the rational Mind, Thought, Reflection, Love, Desire, Memory, &c. are the Effects of Matter variously transfigured, refined and moved. They believe the continual Order and Harmony of Things, obvious to every Eye, is the Work of Chance; that the Sun has rose and set, the heavenly Bodies have describ'd their Orbits, and accomplish'd their Revolutions in one uniform, regular Manner, and this for the Space of many thousand Years, and all by the Force of Chance, i. e. of a blind Nothing!*

And is not this a glorious Scheme, a rational Faith! Can these Men, with any Modesty, object against the Christian Faith, as void of Reason? while they themselves believe all these strange and unaccountable Things, not only without, but against Reason and Demonstration: But whatever is pretended, 'tis not Reason that governs them in this Matter; there must be another Cause assigned for their Infidelity, than what they are willing to own. And, in short, it is not want of Evidence, that Religion is true; that there is a God, a Providence and a future State; but want of Inclination that there shou'd be so: *The Fool hath said in his Heart, there is no God; or, let there be no God.* 'Tis the Language of his Desire, rather than the Conviction of his Judgment; the common Case of all this Herd of Men: They have no Hopes of Heaven; can think of another World only

only as a Place of Torment; as an Hell; and therefore would fain, if they could, run down the Notion of it; their Guilt and Fears are the chief Argument against it. This is sufficiently intimated by one of themselves (*Lucretius*) who takes notice, “ That the * Fear of Hell and After-Punishment must be utterly abolished, otherwise “ it will disturb the Pleasures and Enjoyments of “ Life, ” which is the true Secret of Infidelity, and Spring of Atheism; otherwise the Belief of Immortality is so agreeable to the rational Nature, and the Evidence of it so strong, that it would be a greater Difficulty to reject than admit it. Nor is there a more effectual Method to cure this Distemper, than to endeavour to cure the Principle from whence it flows. A good Man can never wish there was no other State, and a bad Man disbelieves it only because he dislikes it. O my Soul! guard against the Prejudices and Influence of a vicious Nature. Let not thy Affections bribe thy Judgment: Live so as that a future, eternal State may be thy Hope, not thy Dread: And if thou desirest it, thou wilt never want sufficient Reason to believe it.

2dly, I may hence collect the true Notion of Heaven and future Happiness. It is almost too mean to say it consists not in sensual Pleasures, like the Impostor's *Paradise*; nor doth it consist chiefly in an external Glory and Magnificence; but very much in the State, Frame, and Disposition of the Soul; in the Purity of the Heart, the Rectitude of the Mind, and the consequent Enjoyments.

Suppose

* Et metus ille foras præceps Acherontis agendus
Penitus; humanam Vitam qui turbit, ab imo
Omnia suffundens Mortis Nigrore, neque ullam
Esse Voluptatem liquidam puramq; relinquit.

Suppose a wicked Man in Heaven, *i. e.* should he intrude into the Place of it, with his irregular Desires, turbulent Passions, full of Enmity to God, utterly estrang'd from the Work and Pleasures of Religion; his Mind tainted with Envy, Malice, &c. such a one would find no Heaven *in Heaven*: The Kingdom of God, both of Grace and Glory, is within; the Pleasures of *Paradise* are intellectual. Under this View, O my Soul! thou must chuse and pursue Happiness: And if such an Happiness be not agreeable to thee, thou must either renounce Heaven, or correct thy own Temper.

3dly, Have I so much Certainty of *Paradise*, how willing should I be to leave this World, and remove thither! How readily should I join with *Phil. i. 23.* the great Apostle in his Choice! *I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.* O my Soul! send Faith as a Spy into that good Land; endeavour to taste some of the Fruits of it, and it will quicken thy Affections to it, and strip Death of its Terrors. Death, I know, is not in it self grateful; it is contrary to the Original Law and Tendency of Nature, which was to be happy without dying: But seeing it is now the only Way to *Paradise*, the present State of Things in this World, the full Glory and Blessedness of the other, should reconcile thee to the Passage. Why so fond of Earth when such a Heaven is in View! O my Soul! take thy self to task here; not only think what *Paradise* will be, but what Earth is: And if the Hopes of the one be not sufficient to make Death appear desirable, the Experience of the other sure will do it. Consider this Matter a little.

What a Circle of mean Services dost thou here move in, attending the Demands of the Body, and ministering to its Appetites. The Philosopher (*Seneca*)

neca) could say, a Man would dare to die, though he was neither valiant nor miserable, only weary to do the same Things over and over again. Another declares, That if God should grant him, after he had run his Race, to begin it again, he would most earnestly refuse it: For, says he, what Profit has this Life; and how much Toil? *Farther*, what a Clog, Incumbrance, and Snare do I find this Body? How does it depress, cloud, and enfeeble the Mind. On which account, was there nothing more, a Person that has a Sense of the Dignity of human Nature, would be willing to part with the Body, that he might get out of this sleepy State, into a State of Activity and Life. How much are we at present disabled for the Work of Religion, and the proper Employment of Spirits? How little do we know, love, and enjoy God? How meanly do we serve him? If our Heart is in Frame to Day, it is, it may be, quite wrong to Morrow: We have it to dress and cultivate, to wind up again. And after all, the Body, like a dead Weight, hangs upon our Wheels. *Farther*, How great, how uncomfortable our Distance from God here? *Whilst at home in the Body, we* 2 Cor. v. 6. *are absent from the Lord.* How seldom can I get near? How little can I keep near? If now and then he lifts up the Light of his Countenance upon me, and thereby puts Gladness into my Heart, anon he hideth his Face, and I am troubled. And who would be fond of such a Life as this, which at best is an Absence from God? *Once more*, How imperfect, how sinful a State this? A Consideration, which alone is sufficient to make the Christian weary of it, and willing to be releas'd; especially when in *Paradise* this Imperfection shall be done away. *Blessed are the Dead, for they rest from their Labours*; from all their Exercises and Sorrows;

and particularly from those of a sinful, sinning Nature. O glorious Rest! the Prospect of which is enough to begin a Triumph, and make the devout Soul cry for the Wings of a Dove. "If an
 " Angel from Heaven, says one, should assure an
 " holy Man, that from such a Moment he should
 " sin no more; what Joy would it fill him with?
 " The World would not be big enough to hold
 " such a Soul." Well Death is such an Angel, such a Messenger, it comes with this Assurance to the Christian; its Errand is to carry him to *Paradise*, where he shall neither sin, nor suffer any more for ever. O my Soul! believe this, and learn to correct thy Sentiments of dying; thy Style with Reference to it; to think and speak of Death more agreeably to Christian Principles. How common is it to say, even in the Case of a Christian, *He is dead poor Man!* But why *poor Man?* when Death is his Perfection, his Life and his Glory. O my God! strengthen my Faith, help me to fix my Eyes on *Paradise*; to be more conversant in the Land of Promise and Rest; and I shall grow out of Love with this Wilderness, and not fear the Waters of *Jordan*. *A good Man should only need Leave to die!*

Atbly, Infer, O my Soul! the Folly and Madness of those, who for the *Shadow and Dream* of an earthly Happiness, deprive themselves of the Joys of *Paradise*: I call it a Shadow, a Dream, for 'tis no better. All who have tried the Experiment, and sought an Happiness here below, have felt the Delusion, and found the Disappointment. The State of our present Enjoyments is not pure enough to afford Happiness; they are adulterated and mix'd. There is a Sorrow interwoven with our Comforts; a Sting in the Tail of our Delights; and then how uncertain? how frequently interrupted?

ted? how momentary and fading? Shouldst thou, O my Soul! place thy Happiness in bodily Pleasures, these will be soon gone; Distempers or Age will take away the Relish of them; the evil Days will come, and the Years draw nigh, when thou shalt be forced to say, these are no Pleasures; and then Death will make an eternal Separation. Are Riches, Honours, &c. thy Bait, the Phantom thou embracest, under the Name and Notion of Happiness? As they cannot satisfy, while thou hast 'em, so thou canst not keep them. This Scene of Things, *the Fashion of this World* passeth away; in a few Years at most thou must resign thy Breath and Life; and then whose shall these Things be? And where will that Happiness be that depends thereon? O my Soul! dread the Thoughts of such Imposture. Was there no other, no better Happiness, it would be no Crime to chuse what's present, and make the best thou canst of it: But to prefer it to *Paradise*, chuse it instead of God and Heaven, and all the Blessings of a future, eternal State, is something that wants a Name: It is a Degree of Madness that no Heart can fully conceive, no Words express, but will appear hereafter in a proper Light; appear to the utter Shame and Amazement of poor deluded Creatures: And, no doubt, Reflection hereupon will be one Ingredient in their Hell. "For *how short* a Pleasure, says he, "have I parted with a Kingdom," that sold it in his Extremity for a Drink of Water? I had, says the Sinner, the Offers of Life, the Joys of Heaven proposed to me; but I sold my Birth-right for a Mess of Pottage! *I might have been an Angel, but I would be a Brute; and now I am become a Devil!* How will such Thoughts distress the Mind, and inrage the Flames of Hell? Lord save me from so fatal a Mistake! Help me so to chuse now, as that I may approve hereafter.

An

*An Eighth Meditation on HEAVEN.**The CONSOLATION.*

AND is there so certain a Prospect of such glorious Things? Solace thy self, O my Soul! therein; let the Hope of *Paradise* ease thy Complaint and lessen thy Burden. When Christ was fortifying his Disciples against Sorrow and Desertion; *Let not your Hearts, saith he, be troubled:* He immediately adds, as an Antidote against Trouble, *In my Father's House are many Mansions,* And I find him elsewhere applying and using his own Doctrine for the same Purpose: *For the Joy set before him, he endured the Cross, despising the Shame.* Believe, O my Soul! these Mansions; set thy Lord's Joy before thee; let Faith and Hope take hold of that which is within the Veil, and they will be an Anchor to thee, keep thee stedfast in the midst of the Storms of a tempestuous World: Whatever thy present Exercises be, from the World, from the Body, from Sin, from Satan; *Paradise* will end all, and make amends for all: There is no more Death, no more Night, Darkness, or Tears in that World. Indeed *Paradise* is future, but 'tis certain and near: Faith can set thee beyond this intervening *almost Nothing* of Time; realize and presentiate it to thee: And who that believes *that* it is, and knows in any Measure *what* it is, would make any great Account of present Grievances? I reckon, saith the Apostle, *that the Sufferings of the present Time* (τὰ νῦν Καίροϋ, of the *Now of Time*, this flowing, passing Instant) *are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed.* O my Soul! state and ballance Accounts between this World and that;

John xiv.
1, 2.

Heb. xii.
2.

Rom. viii.
18.

that ; these Sorrows and those Joys. Think of-
 ten how little the one, how great the other ; how
 short the one, how lasting the other. And let thy
 future Hopes quiet thee under present Sorrows.
 It was thought an Indecency, as not comporting
 with his Quality and Relation, for a *King's Son* to
 look lean from Day to Day. And shall the Sons ^{2 Sam.xiii.}
 of the King of Heaven, the destined and appoint-
 ed Heirs of an eternal *Paradise*, suffer every little
 Grievance to ruffle and discompose them ? This,
 O my Soul ! is unworthy of thy Hopes ; the Re-
 membrance of which, did that State admit any
 such Resentments, would make thee blush in *Pa-
 radise*. “ What Thoughts, saith the Martyr, shall
 “ we have of the Sufferings of this Life, when
 “ we have reigned thousands of Years with Christ
 “ in Glory ! ” ’Tis easy to imagine what Thoughts
 we shall have *then* ; may I have somewhat the like
 Thoughts *now*. Help me, O my God, to con-
 verse more above, and I shall less regard what
 passes here below. *This present* is a light Afflic-
 tion, and but for a Moment : *That an exceeding,*
a far more exceeding and an eternal Weight of Glory.
 May I believe it ; live in the Hopes of it ; and not
 only be patient, but joyful in Tribulation !

The SOLILOQUY and COMPLAINT.

WHAT Cause, O my Soul ! to lament the
 Neglect and Mistake of Happiness ! the
 Neglect of *Paradise*, and the fatal Mistake of
 seeking an Happiness here below ? How common
 this, even among Christians ; who yet profess to
 believe a *Paradise* ; who have admitted it into
 their Creed, as an Article of their Faith ? How
 Few, who seem to have any true Regard and Re-
 ference to that State ? Most (as was said of the
Jews,

Jews, with respect to *Canaan*, the Typical *Paradise* *despise the pleasant Land*, and are manifestly in their Temper and Frame carnal and sensual, minding earthly Things. This has been the Manner of the greatest part of the World; it's well if I may not say of the Church: They are still hovering over this Earth, pursuing an Happiness in and from the Creature; and this after all former Attempts in the same way have been utterly baffled: No Warnings will take Effect with us. O wretched Case! Strange Infatuation of unthinking Men! "The Experience of almost six Thousand Years, one would think (to borrow the Words of a worthy Person) sufficient to testify the Incompetency of every worldly Thing, to make Men happy: That the pleasing of our selves, and the Gratification of our Animal Part, is not Blessedness; that Men are still left unsatisfied notwithstanding. But the Practice and Course of the World is such, as if these were some late and rare Experiments, which, for Curiosity, every one must be trying over again: Every Age renews the Enquiry after an earthly Felicity; the Design is entailed (as the *Spanish* Designs are said to be) and reinforced with as great Confidence and Vigour from Age to Age, as if none had been defeated in it before, or that it was very likely to take at last. Had this been the alone Folly of the first Age, it had admitted some Excuse: But that the World should still be cheated by the same, so oft repeated Impostures, presents us with a sad Prospect of the deplorable State of Mankind: *This their Way is their Folly, yet their Posterity approve their Sayings.* The wearied Wits, and wasted Estates laid out upon the Philosopher's Stone, afford but a faint, defective

“ defective Representation of this Case. What
“ *Chymistry* can extract Heaven out of a Clod of
“ Clay? What Art can make Blessedness spring,
“ and grow out of this cold Earth? If all created
“ Nature be vexed and tortured never so long,
“ who can expect this *Elixir*? Yet after so many
“ frustrated Attempts, so much Time and Labour
“ lost, Men are still as eagerly and vainly busy
“ as ever; are perpetually tossed by unsatisfied De-
“ sires, labouring in the Fire, wearying themselves
“ for their Vanity, distracted by the uncertain, and
“ often contrary Motions of a ravenous Appetite
“ and a blind Mind, and wou’d be happy, and
“ know not how.” And this they they do with a
Neglect, and too often a Contempt of the only pos-
sible Happiness, clearly set before them, and freely
tender’d to them: They pretend to be in Quest of
Felicity, and yet run away from it. O my Soul!
drop a compassionate Tear over the Follies of the
human Race, who are thus hurried on even to De-
struction, by an old, and known Delusion, dashing
upon the same Rock, so many Myriads before them
have split upon; who have (some of ’em at least)
confess’d the Cheat, and left behind them Pillars
and Monuments of Warning to Posterity.

Bewail, O my Soul! this woful Stupidity of
thy Fellow-Creatures; bewail thy own Stupidity
herein. How hast thou been caught in the Snare,
been hankering after the Creature, coveting the ac-
curst Thing: And after thou hadst set thy Face as
if thou woud’st leave, and withdraw from this Earth,
how prone to look back? How little hast thou
minded that Heaven thou pretendest to have cho-
sen? How much estranged from the glorious *Pa-
radise* above, in thy Thoughts, Desires, and Affec-
tions! It wou’d seem, by the Accounts we have of
the

* *Apol. second.*

the first Christians, that they had so lively an Expectation of *Paradise*, and were so much taken up with it, that they cou'd think or speak of scarce any thing else : *The Kingdom*, the (heavenly) Kingdom, was so much in their Mouth, that their Enemies misapprehending them, accus'd 'em of treasonable Designs against the Empire: Nay, so much were their Affections gone from this World, that they could scarce wait their appointed Time in it : They reckoned with that good Man, that every Day spent on Earth was a Day lost in Heaven, and therefore (not without Fault oftentimes) court-ed Death. " Being inflam'd, saith *Justin* * *Mar-*
 " *tyr*, with the Desire of a pure and eternal Life,
 " we breath after an intimate Converse with God,
 " the great Parent and Creator of the World ;
 " and make haste to seal our Confession with our
 " Blood." But how little of this Spirit is to be found among the Christians of our Day? We are for *Stocks* and *Treasures* here on Earth (on any Terms) but how coolly do we pursue Treasure in Heaven? with most it is quite out of Sight, and as much out of Mind : Everlasting Life stands in our *Bibles* and *Creeds*, but has little Place in our Hearts. O my Soul ! bewail thy own Share in this Guilt ; weep over the woful Frame of thy carnal Heart : How languid thy Affections ; how slow thy Motion towards Heaven ! insomuch, that sometimes it remains a Matter of just Suspicion with thee, whether thou really intendest it or not. Lord, pity me under my frequent and great Infirmities ; give my Affections a stronger Byass, a more constant Bent towards thyself ; may I never forget the blessed Mansions above. Help me to love *Paradise* more ; to live upon it, and in it more ; that this World may be less my Temptation, and that my sure Portion.

A Ninth

*A Ninth Meditation on HEAVEN.**The RESOLUTION.*

O MY Soul! secure thy Interest in the heavenly *Paradise*; make good thy Title: Having a Promise left of entering into Rest, fear, lest thou shouldest seem to come short of it; labour to put the Matter beyond all rational Doubt. This I would endeavour, and accordingly resolve upon such Measures in my After-Conduct, as may be necessary and proper hereunto. Particularly,

1st, I resolve (Lord help me by thy Grace) to study the Evidence of this great Point, I would endeavour for the Faith, *which is the Substance of* Heb. xii. *Things hoped for, and the Demonstration of Things* 1. *not seen.* O my Soul! be at some Expence and Pains here. The Subject is worthy of thy most diligent and serious Enquiries: Endeavour to realize Heaven to thyself; to get all Objections and Suspicions concerning it removed; and converse with such Arguments and Considerations as have the greatest Tendency to assist and establish thy Faith. *We know, saith the Apostle, that we* 2 Cor. v. *have a Building of God, an House not made with* 1. *Hands, eternal in the Heavens.* It was no Question with them, whether there was another and better World, everlasting Habitations. Lord, help me to represent Heaven to myself in *its Certainty* and full Evidence, that I may look upon it as the greatest Reality, and accordingly wait for it.

2^{dly}, As there are undoubted Marks of Exclusion, certain distinguishing Characters of some that shall be rejected of God, and shut out of *Paradise*, it shall be my Care to avoid these, and keep

1 Cor. ix. keep at the greatest Distance from them. *Know ye not, saith the Apostle, that the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God; be not deceived; neither Fornicators, nor Idolators, nor Adulterers,—nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Railers, &c. shall inherit the Kingdom of God.* He speaks of it, as a known, confess'd Thing among Christians (which none could dispute that had any just Notions of God, and acknowledged Scripture-Revelation) that Persons of such Impurity could have no Title to *Paradise*. The lurking Hypocrite, that artfully disguises himself, is not so easily detected; but gross Sinners have a Brand in their Foreheads; they too visibly wear the Devil's Livery to be overlook'd. Guard therefore, O my Soul! against all Approaches towards this fatal Character; *have no Fellowship with the unfruitful Works of Darkness; walk not in the Counsel of the Ungodly.* The Profane and Sensual bear the Marks of final Rejection and Reprobation, and shall as certainly perish, as if by Name proscribed for everlasting Destruction.

3dly, As it is not enough that I escape the grosser Pollutions there are in the World thro' Lust, but my Nature must be refined and suited to the Happiness above; I humbly purpose and resolve to make this my Care: *Without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord. I must be born again; made meet to partake of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.* Heaven must be begun here; the Seeds of a blessed Immortality sown in this Life; the Principles of it laid in the Temper and Disposition of the Mind. Endeavour, O my Soul! to find and experience something of this; beg for the regenerating Spirit, and for farther Measures thereof. The carnal Mind is Enmity against God, and therefore cannot enjoy Heaven; that Heaven

ven which God gives, and which God is : Such as are under the Power and Influence of it are fundamentally disqualified for *Paradise* ; they want an immediate Capacity ; can neither relish the Work, Company, nor Enjoyments of that State : They have not learnt the Notes and Hallelujahs of Heaven ; cannot sing the Song of *Zion*. Lord, restore thy Likeness, fit me for thy Love, for thine Embraces. If I live and die unsanctified, I shall be excluded *Paradise*, not only by the Law of God, but that of my own impure Nature.

4^{thly}, As the Lord of that World has Right to prescribe Measures of Life, a Rule to walk by, to all who shall partake of the Blessedness of *Paradise* ; I resolve, (Lord, help me by thy Grace) to study this Rule, and endeavour Conformity thereto. The Rule in general is the divine Law ; which may be considered, either as *first* given to Mankind, or as given afterwards upon a Change in our State and Circumstances. The first Law was *that* given to Man in Innocency, and required entire Obedience without Defect or Failure : And this was the Law our first Parents were under ; upon the fulfilling of which, their Title to Life, both in the earthly and heavenly *Paradise*, depended. But this (the fulfilling of the Law, I mean,) being become impossible to their guilty Apostate Descendants, none of whom can expect Heaven, or have any Title to it, according to the Tenor of that Law ; there is therefore another Law more accommodated to the State and Circumstances of fallen Man, *viz.* *The Gospel, the Law of Grace or of Faith*, as the Apostle calls it, *Rom. iii. 27.*

“ Which is that Part of the Gospel Revelation
 “ that contains and discovers our Duty, what we
 “ are to be, and to do in order to Blessedness,

How's Blessedness of the Righteous, p. 26.

S

“ being,

“ being, as to the Matter of it, the whole Moral Law before appertaining to the Covenant of Works, attempered to the State of fallen Sinners, by Evangelical Mitigations and Indulgences, with the super-added Precepts of Repentance, and Faith in a Mediator; with all the other Duties respecting the Mediator as such; and clothed with a new Form, as it is now taken into the Constitution of the Covenant of Grace.”

And even this Law, the Law of Grace, may be again distinguished, into the Law of *Sincerity*, and the Law of (Evangelical) *Perfection*. The former, the Law of *Sincerity*, must be understood to require “ the mere Being of those gracious Principles with their essential Acts (as there is Opportunity) expressed therein, in opposition to the Nullity, or Insincerity of them.” The other the Law of *Perfection*, requires the utmost Degree of Improvement in Virtue or Grace, which, in the several States and Periods of our Life, we are capable of attaining to: We are enjoined to grow in Grace, to perfect Holiness in the Fear of God; and to be perfect, as our Father in Heaven is perfect. And as the Demands of these Laws are diverse, so are their Sanctions

* Ibid. 28. diverse: The Law of Sincerity requiring the Essence of divine Grace, of every Grace, constitutes therein the Terms of Salvation, and obligeth under the Penalty of eternal Death: Thus Faith, Repentance, Love, Subjection, &c. are required. He is * the Author of eternal Salvation to all those that obey him; but he will come in flaming Fire to take Vengeance on those that know not God, and obey not the Gospel; who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction, &c. Where it is only the Sincerity of those several Requisites, that is, under so severe

John viii. 24.
 Luke xiii. 3, 5.
 Acts iii. 19.
 —v. 3.
 1 Cor. xvi. 13, 22.
 Luke xiv. 26.
 Heb. v. 3.
 2 Thess. i. 8, 9.

severe a Penalty, exacted and called for; in as much as he that is sincerely a Believer, a Penitent, a Lover of God, or Christ, an obedient Subject, is not capable of the contrary Denomination; and therefore not liable, according to the Tenor of this Law, to be punished as an Infidel, an impenitent Person, an Enemy, a Rebel. The Law of Perfection requiring constant Improvements and Advances; all that Love, Service, Obedience; all that Fruitfulness, in every good Word and Work, watching all Opportunities and Occasions of doing and getting Good; and this in the whole Course, with all the Exactness and Steadiness we are capable of: This Law, I say, demanding this of us, doth not bind upon Penalty of eternal Damnation, farther than our Neglects and Miscarriages may be so gross and continued, as not to consist with *Sincerity*. But the Penalty here is, the hiding of God's Face; with a great Variety of fatherly Chastisements and Castigations in this World, with the Deprivation of many Degrees of Happiness in the other World: *He that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly.* 2 Cor. ix. 6.

Now this is the Rule, the standing Law, according to which the Judge and Lord of all will proceed at last. But doth not this ascribe too much to Works, making Heaven the Reward and Result of them? I answer, it makes the Consequence of them; asserts the Necessity of Works in order to future Happiness; which every one must own, that can look into his Bible, and has not learn'd to wrangle away the plainest Texts. Indeed to talk of being happy without Holiness, without partaking of a divine Nature, without the Principles of the divine Life, evidenced and expressed in a Course of Obedience, implies a Contradiction. Notwithstanding nothing, according

cording to this Scheme, is ascribed to Works derogatory to the Grace of God: *The Creature is still laid low, and he that glories, must glory in the Lord.* There's no Merit placed in our Obedience; 'tis of Grace, and thro' the Mediation of Christ, that the Law of Faith is established, and our very imperfect Obedience accepted: Our Faith and Obedience is owing to the Influence and Operation of the *Paraclete*, the Supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, promised and given under the Gospel Dispensation. 'Tis God that works in us to will and to do of his own good Pleasure. Nor is there any Proportion between our mean, defective Service here on Earth, and the Joys of *Paradise*. By *Grace we are saved*; (finally saved, as well as brought into the Gospel-way of Salvation.) All in Heaven will own this, *and cast down their Crowns before the Throne.*

Rev. iv.
10.

O my Soul! attend thy Rule; subject thy self to the Authority of thy great Lord and Master; study and live his Gospel; transcribe it in Practice; observe what he has taught, particularly in his excellent Sermon on the Mount, concerning Poverty of Spirit, Meekness, Mercifulness, Heart Purity, thirsting after Righteousness, Chastity, forgiving and loving Enemies; concerning Prayer, Alms, Fasting; against an anxious Care and Solitude about this Life; about laying up Treasure in Heaven; seeking first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness. See that thou hast the Truth of every Grace, that thou mayest not be condemned by the Law of Sincerity. “ * He who hath so submitted
“ his Will to the Will of God, as to be thorough-
“ ly resolved, without Reserve, to obey him,
“ and not to do any thing that is contrary to his
“ Will either against Knowledge, or through affected Ignorance or Inconsideration, hath in this
“ Resolution,

* Dr. Scot.

“ Resolution, the real Being of all Christian Graces, and Virtues in him, supposing the Resolution flow from a divine Principle) and stands “ uncondemned by the Law of Sincerity.” May it be thus with me; may I keep up this Resolution, and accordingly practise. (Lord, assist me by thy Grace, or my Resolution will fail!) Nor would I rest in low Attainments, and be satisfied with little and weak Grace, but press forwards towards the Mark, *adding to my Faith Virtue, to my Virtue Knowledge, &c.* Adding one Degree of Grace to another, that these Things may be in me and abound; so that I be neither barren nor unfruitful in the Knowledge of the Lord Jesus. Lord, quicken me in thy Way; may I be always attentive, watchful and vigorous in my Work, as a Christian; using all proper Measures and Ministries of Improvement. This is what I would propose, aim at, and endeavour. *O strengthen me by thy Spirit, with Might in the Inward Man!*

5thly, I would also resolve to improve the several Talents committed to me: I find the Sentence in the future Judgment, according to our Care herein. *He that had received the five Talents, and* Matt. xxv. improved them, was accepted: *Enter thou into* Ver. 21. *the Joy of thy Lord.* So he that improved his *two* — 22. *Talents*, whilst the other, that hid his Talent in the Earth, is called a *stolishful, unprofitable, and* — 30. *wicked Servant, and condemned to outer darkness.*

Consider, O my Soul! thy Trust, and endeavour to be a faithful Steward of the manifold Gifts of God. Thou hast Talents of different Kinds committed to thee: *Talents of Nature*; as Reason, Judgment, the Power of Choice, Conscience, Memory, the Senses of the Body, and all the Faculties of the Mind: *Talents of Providence*; as Riches, Learning, Reputation, Interest in the

World, Power and Authority, Health, Time, &c. *Talents of Grace*, as I may distinguish them; the Bible, the Ministry of the Word, the Institutions of the Gospel, the Influences and Operations of the Holy Spirit, &c. Some of all these thou hast receiv'd; if not five or two, at least *One Talent*: Resolve to be faithful over thy few Things. Lord, help me to improve all my Powers and Capacities, my worldly Substance, my Parts, Time, all my Interests and Abilities to the Honour of my great Master; and as he has prescribed, may this be my constant Care: Grant me the great Blessing of a faithful Conscience, which on all Occasions may admonish and direct; and do thou assist me by thy Grace.

6thly, That I may be fit for the other World, I would resolve and endeavour to live more weaned from this; more disengaged from it, and indifferent about it; to guard against its Inchantments and Flatteries, and to keep it under Foot: How often has it play'd the Impostor with me, stood glaring before my Eyes in false Colours? It has look'd gay at a Distance; but when I have come near, and touched it, it has, like the sensitive Plant, contracted and shrivell'd up into a little Compass. Love not the World, O my Soul! nor the Things that are in the World; get it crucified by the Cross of Christ! Lord, anoint my Eyes with Eye-salve, that I may see more clearly *that* World, which is afar off, and see the Emptiness of this; look it into Darkness, a Shadow, and Nothing!

7thly, I would endeavour; be resolved herein, O my Soul! (Lord, assist me by thy Grace) to intend this, the securing my Interest in *Paradise*, as *my great and main Work*, the governing Concern of Life: 'Tis the one thing needful, the of a Christian, his most important Affair, to which every

every thing else must be subordinate: *Strive*, Luke xiii.
 faith Christ, *to enter in at the strait Gate.* The^{24.}
 Word he uses (*Ἀγωνίζεσθαι*) is borrowed from the
Olympick Games, and notes an Earnestness, like
 that with which the Combatants there contended
 for the Prize. And to the same Purpose, *Give* 2 Pet.i.10.
all Diligence. And this exemplified in the Prac-
 tice of the Primitive Christians. May this be the Phil. iii.
 constant Bent and Temper of my Mind: And^{12, 13, 14.}
 whenever my Zeal begins to cool, and I grow^{2 Cor.v.9.}
 more indifferent about the Concerns of my Soul,
 may I not rest in so dangerous a Frame. O quick-
 en me in thy good Way; help me to fix my Eye
 upon the Goal (the Mark;) *may I be steadfast, un-*
moveable in the Work of the Lord.

8thly, I resolve (Lord help me by thy Grace)
 frequently to enquire into my State, to examine my
 Heart, Frame, Conduct, and bring all under Cen-
 sure; which sometimes I would attempt with
 more Vigour and Solemnity. Be faithful, O my
 Soul, herein! Don't live a Stranger to thyself;
 often put such Questions as these to thyself: "Up-
 " on what Terms do I stand with God and Con-
 " science? What Hope of Heaven? What Foun-
 " dation for my Hope? What Meetness for Pa-
 " radise? Should I die this Year, Month, or
 " Week, should I die in the Lord, and enter into
 " the Joy of my Lord?" Thus shall my Spirit
 make diligent Search: Lord, direct and prosper
 me in my Work.

9thly, Whatever I find Matter of Disquietude,
 of Uneasiness and reasonable Fear to me, on the
 Account of which I am ready to question my
 State; I resolve not to cease till I have it remov'd:
 If a head-strong Lust and Corruption, I'll endea-
 vour its Mortification; if Want or Weakness of
 Grace, Neglects, Omissions, Aversion to spiritual

Work and Converſe, Unſuitableneſs of Heart and Frame to *Paradiſe*, &c. it ſhall be my Care to get this Matter ſet right; the Cauſe of Complaint taken away: Lord, eſtabliſh my Purpoſes, and ſucceed them with thy Bleſſing.

10thly, I would ſometimes make a more vigorous Effort towards Heaven, raiſing the Heart and Affections as near it as I can; endeavouring to abſtract and withdraw from the Body, and mix a while with the Inhabitants of *Paradiſe*. As this is done in a lower Degree, *often*, in the Courſe of a devout Chriſtian's Life, in Meditation, Prayer, Sacraments, &c. ſo it ſhould now and then be attempted in farther Meaſures; the Soul ſet apart for Intercourſe with God and Heaven; as on a Day of ſecret Humiliation or Thankſgiving. Lord, may I be acquainted with ſuch Employment, ſuch bleſſed Work; know more of Communion with thyſelf, and therein foretaſte more of the Pleaſures of *Paradiſe*. This is the way to ſecure thy Intereſt, O my Soul! in Heaven, and to have an abundant Entrance adminiſtered into it.

11thly, As the Mediation of Chriſt is the Ground of my Claim, and Foundation of my Title, and of all my Hopes of *Paradiſe*, I would conſtantly depend thereon, and conſtantly plead the Atonement he has made. May I look to him for daily Pardon and Peace, and farther Acceptance.

Eph. i. 7.

Theſe, O my God! are the humble Purpoſes and Reſolutions of my Soul: Eſtabliſh and confirm them; keep theſe Things for ever upon the Imaginations of the Thoughts of my Heart. I commit my Way unto thee, reſigning my ſelf to the Conduct of thy Grace and Spirit: Grant me thy Preſence and Favour here, thy Heaven hereafter; and as to the reſt, the lower, leſſer Things of this little

little World, I insist on nothing: What thou wilt, as thou wilt. *Deus meus & omnia*, My God is my All.

A Meditation on the Love of CHRIST.

Revelat. i. 5. *Unto him that loved us.*

THE Mystery of Redemption is a Mystery of Love; so the Scripture represents it every where celebrating the Love of the Father and the Son, in this great and glorious Work: *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son. In this was manifested the Love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the World, that we might live through him. Herein is Love; not that we loved God but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins. Walk in love, as Christ hath loved us, and hath given himself for us—Christ loved the Church, and gave himself, &c. Christ hath loved the Church.* And so eminent and signal is his Love, that 'tis made his Character and Description: *Through him that hath loved us. Him that loved us. To him; 'tis not said who he is; he's not distinguished by any proper Name; and yet what's said of him is a sufficient Designation of the Person intended, was there nothing more: Him that loved us. He hath loved, and so loved, as never any did: Love is his Name, and Love his Memorial in the Church for ever.*

O my Soul! contemplate this glorious Subject, the Love of thy Redeemer. Lord, help me by thy Grace; enlighten, enliven, scatter the Clouds that too often, and even, now alas! overspread my Mind. Give me a more distinct Apprehension, a clearer

clearer View of thy Love, thy wondrous Love ; touch a dead and dull Heart ; tune my earthly Affections ; raise them to a more suitable Pitch, that I may feel the Power and Influence of the Subject I have before me. *Awake, O my Soul ! awake Psaltery and Harp*, awake every Faculty, all that's within me be stirred up : While I am musing may the Fire burn.

As the whole Doctrine concerning Christ, his Person, Offices, Mediation, and so his *Love* in all, is owing to Revelation ; we must from thence derive our Notions, and thereby regulate our Conceptions and Discourses about them. Let me therefore view the present Subject in the Glass of the Scripture ; of the Gospel particularly, which alone can shew it in a true and proper Light.

And here are two Things I shall propose to myself, briefly to consider ; *what this Love is*, what sort of a Love ; and *wherein it appears*, and is expressed.

I. *What this Love is ?* And 1st, I find Compassion and Bounty included in the Scripture Notion of it : Love in us, has generally a great deal of Selfishness in it ; we are sensible of a Penury, and Want in our own Beings, and therefore seek some Augmentation, or Addition by Union with the Object we love : Either there is something agreeable, and beneficial in the Object, that recommends it to our Esteem, and engages our Affections ; or we are laid under Obligations by the Love, Friendship, &c. of those we love ; and therefore love, because we are first loved. But the Love of Christ is not this way excited ; we had neither done any thing to oblige him, nor have we any thing that could engage him, any farther than the Misery he saw us involved in, might move him : *Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us,*
Which

Which is equally true of the Father and of the Son.

2dly, 'Tis a free, generous, heroick Love, like that of some great and publick Benefactor, who, touched with the Miseries and Distresses of Mankind, undertakes their Relief. *When we were without Strength, Ungodly, Sinners, Enemies, Christ died for us.* The Fall had impoverish'd us, brought us under a Curse, and the Sentence of Death; the Love of Christ ransomed us: *If one died for all, then were all dead.* Rom. v. 6, 8, 10. 2 Cor. v. 14.

3dly, And how great, as well as free this Love? No Instance of human Love can equal it: The highest *that* ever rose, was for one Friend to die for another; as in the Case of *Damon and Pythias*: *Greater Love hath no Man, than that a Man lay down his Life for his Friends.* But greater Love hath God-Man, who laid down his Life for Enemies. John xv. 13.

4thly, 'Tis a Love above all Thought and Conception of ours; as the Apostle intimates. *That ye may be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the Breadth, and Length, and Depth, and Height, and to know the Love of Christ;* he adds, *which passeth Knowledge.* 'Tis above our Understanding; we can't find it out to Perfection; we know not the full Dignity of his Person, the Greatness of his Condescension; and therefore can't pretend to measure his Love in its utmost Latitude; on which Account, it may be, the Apostle ascribes a fourfold Dimension to it. Eph. iii. 18, 19.

But why doth he desire the *Ephesians* might comprehend it, and that *with all Saints*, if it really passeth Knowledge, and can't be so comprehended? I answer, all the Saints study it, search into it, and endeavour to comprehend more and more of it: Something they know, more they desire to know; they

they stoop down with the Angels, and look into these Things; they are *comprehending*; and tho' they have not already attained, they are pressing forward towards the Mark. Now the Apostle prays for the *Ephesians*, that the same Mind may be in them, that they may, with all Saints, study this Love. And, O my Soul! join thou in the Subject; nothing more worthy of thy Enquiries: Lord, shed abroad thy Love in my Heart; let Christ dwell there by Faith, that I being rooted and grounded in Love, may better understand and take in more of the Love of my Redeemer.

A Second Meditation on the Love of
CHRIST.

II. **H**AVING on another Occasion spent some little Time in meditating upon the Love of Christ; where I considered what is included in the Notion of his Love, I now return to the Subject. Lord, deliver my Thoughts from their usual Barrenness, my Mind from Distraction and Vanity, and tune my Heart for this blessed Work!

I am to enquire into the Justice of this Character: *He that has loved us*, and consider wherein he hath manifested his Love: And 1st, How readily did he undertake for poor Sinners, in that Stipulation between the Father and him, which *Divines* call the Covenant of Redemption: The Wisdom of God, as Lawgiver and Governor, insisted upon an Atonement for Sin: Some honourable Expedient upon which he might forgive Sin, and treat with Sinners, with a *Salvo* to all his Perfections, and to the Authority of his own Law;

Law; might appear just, and yet the Justifier of ^{Rom. iii.} him that believeth in Jesus. This Expedient, in ^{26.} short was, that the Son should take our Nature, and therein die a Victim, which he consented to with all Chearfulness: *Sacrifice and Offering thou* ^{Pf. xl. 6,} *didst not desire; then said I, Lo I come in the Vo-* ^{7. 8.} *lume of thy Book it is written of me.* He said it by way of Compliance with the Father's Proposal and Demand. The Matter was brought to a solemn Contract between them, as seems implied, and therefore it is represented as written in a *Volume*, "Which, says a * learned Man, is no * ^{Dr. Hammond.} other thing than a Bill, or Roll of Contract between God the Father and Christ; wherein is supposed to be written the Agreement, preparatory to that great Work of Christs Incarnation: wherein he undertaking perfectly to fulfil the Will of God, to perform all active, and also all passive Obedience, even unto Death, had the Promise from God, that he should become the Author of eternal Salvation to all that obey him." The Scripture gives several Intimations elsewhere of such a Covenant, (though we have not its precise Form and Plan, nor all the Articles of it;) as, *I have laid Help* ^{Pf. lxxxix.} *upon One that is mighty: My Mercy will I keep* ^{19, 28, 29.} *for him for ever, and my Covenant shall stand fast with him; his Seed will I make to endure for ever, and his Throne as the Days of Heaven.* The Father promised to him a numerous and glorious Progeny: *The Heathen for his Inheritance, the uttermost* ^{—lxxxix.} *Parts of the Earth for his Possession.* This was the ^{19.} Stipulation, the Statute and Decree of God concerning him. But then he must be their Help. Must himself become their Sacrifice, and save by dying: *When thou shalt make his Soul an Offering* ^{Isa. liii. 10,} *for Sin, he shall see his Seed, he shall see of the Travel of* ^{11.} *his*

his Soul, and be satisfied. His Soul must travel, and then be satisfied.

Now here my kind and gracious Redeemer consents; freely and chearfully offers himself: *Lo I come*, saith he, *I delight to do thy Will, O God, thy Law is within my Heart.* He knew what the Will of God was, viz. that instead of legal Sacrifices, altogether insufficient for so great a Service as our Redemption, *He* must be made a Sacrifice; a Body was prepared, which he must live in, die in: And this he submits to with Delight, rejoicing in the Prospect of relieving and succouring perishing Sinners, upon these severe Terms. And who can fathom, who can estimate this Love?

2dly, And how strange an Instance of Love his Incarnation, in pursuance of the forementioned Engagements! *In the Fulness of Time God sent forth his Son, made of a Woman.* He sent him forth, as was purposed and agreed: Christ had said, *Lo I come*; and he did not fail; wou'd not draw back:

John i. 14. *The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us. Made Flesh*: Amazing Condescension! Suppose one of the Angels, who stands in the Presence of God; a bright Seraph shou'd, for the Sake of some special Service to a Number of us Mortals, have left the Regions of Bliss, and have taken up his Dwelling in a human Body; been united to such a Lump of Earth, and been united to its Laws; how shou'd we celebrate such an Act of Kindness and Generosity? We shou'd be often speaking of, and extolling our good Angel. But, O my Soul! here's greater Love, a lower Stoop; thy Redeemer, more excellent than the Angels, has done this: He has loved thee; so loved thee, as to become a Man like thee: The Son of God became the Son of Man, that thou mightest be advanced, to the Dignity of a Son of God.

Nor

Nor was the Condescension notional, that needs the Help of nice and subtile Distinctions, and the Art of Words to make it something; but it was a real and proper Condescension: He laid aside a *Glory he had with the Father before the World was.* John xvii. *Was in the Form of God,* but emptied himself, and *took upon him the Form of a Servant.* Phil. ii. 6, 7. Love brought him from Heaven to Earth; humbled him to the State of an Infant! And what manner of Love *this!* 2 Cor. viii. *Ye know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,* 9. *faith the Apostle; that though he was rich, yet for our Sake he became poor.* We know something of his Grace; know that it is Grace, great Grace; but how great, we know not. Adore, O my Soul! When thou understandest better, thou wilt love more and praise better. *The Word with God became Immanuel, God with us.*

3dly, Nor did he only become Man, but was born in Circumstances of great outward Meanness. His Mother, though of the Royal Line of *David*, yet was of a Family, at that Time, very much reduced. Witness her being espoused to a *Carpenter*; witness her being thrust out into a Stable at the Inn of *Betlehem*. 'Tis indeed said, *There was no Room for them in the Inn.* But no Luke ii. 7. question, had she made any considerable Figure, some or other would have complemented them with an Apartment, or offered them to share with them in their Accommodations; but nothing of this Civility is shewn them: She is forced to shift for herself, and lodge in an Out-house with the Cattle: And there she brings forth her Son, *wraps him in Swadling-cloaths, and lays him in a Manger.* Witness her Offering at the Time of her Purification; which was *two young Pigeons,* Lev. xxii. *the Sacrifice the Law allowed for those that could* 6, 8. *not offer a Lamb.* Luk. ii. 24.

And

And what Condescension and Grace was here ! Blessed Lord ! that thou shouldst consent to be born for me, and thus born ! Thy Chamber of State a Stable ; thy Cradle a Manger, or a Cratch ! What a Stir and Bustle do we often see at the Birth of a poor Worm ! What a pompous *Apparatus*, and Preparation for lying-in ? What Attendance and Ceremony, what Addresses and Flatteries upon the Birth, especially if it be of one of those little Creatures we call an Heir ! And yet ! behold ! the Son of God, Heir of all Things, whom all the Angels of God worship, comes into the World in this Obscurity ! O my Soul ! view thy Lord in this Abasement, and infer thence the Height of his Love : Learn to admire his Love, and imitate his Humility. Some of the devouter *Papists* have a Way of devoting themselves to the *Holy Infancy* of Christ, (as they call it :) There may be a great deal of Humour and Superstition in that ; but certainly we may (with much Advantage) study, and devoutly contemplate his Infancy, which so loudly proclaims Love, and preaches Humility. Look, O my Soul ! to the Manger of Christ, and learn to despise the Poms and Vanities of this World. Look to the Manger of Christ, and adore the Love that brought him thither, and laid him there.

4thly, And how great an Argument of Love may we find in the Condition and Manner of his Life ? He was not only known and distinguished as the *Carpenter's Son*, but it seems served a sort of an Apprenticeship to the Carpenter's Trade.

Mark vi. 3.

Luke ii.
51.

Hence they call him *the Carpenter*. The Son of God handling the Ax and the Plane ! subject to a poor Artisan as his Father and Master, working as an ordinary Mechanick for his Bread ! O my God, thy Love overpowers ! Language here

is

is swallowed up. Adore, O my Soul! in Wonder and Silence adore.

When he entered upon the Stage of publick Action, he still appeared under the same Diminution, and in Circumstances of low Abasement: He had neither House to live in nor Estate to live upon; but was beholding to the Hospitality of his Friends, and subsisted by their Charity: *The Son* Matt. viii.
of Man, saith he, *hath not where to lay his Head.* 20.
 Certain Women, we read, *ministred to him of their* Luke viii.
Substance. And how was he lessened and vilified 3.
 as to his moral Character? He is traduced as a Deceiver, a Mad-man, a Traytor, a Blasphemer, a Conjuror, a Confederate with Devils: Thus he *endured the Contradiction of Sinners against himself.* Heb. xii.
 Of Sinners, for whom he had the kindest Designs, and for whom he was doing the kindest Things. Strange mysterious Love, that reconciled him to such Treatment! He foresaw it, and yet submitted to it; knew what he must expect from the Children of Men, and yet the Prospect of the great Salvation he should accomplish for them, made him delight to be among them. Prov. viii.
 Lord, may I never forget thy Love; never think 31.
 much of Contempt, Reproach, Poverty, and Persecution for thy Sake!

5thly, And what shall I say of his Love in dying: Herein the Scripture lays the greatest Stress of all: *To him that loved, and washed us in his own* Eph. v. 2.
Blood. Christ loved us, and gave himself a Sacrifice.
 Had he only assum'd our Nature, to have lived in it, in all the Ease, Honour and Grandeur that human Affairs will permit, never to have felt a troublesome Moment; and afterwards have been translated to Heaven in a fiery Chariot, with the Acclamations of attending Angels; there had been great Condescension, even in this. But to take a Body

T

on

on Purpose to suffer, to be pierced, wounded, broken; to languish, bleed and die; to be made
 Isa. liii. 3. a Man, that he might be a *Man of Sorrows*, this strangely enhances his Love, and raises it above all Comprehension. Take a View, O my Soul! of his last Scene, so full of Tragedy and Amazement; follow him to *Golgotha*; behold him prostrate in the Garden, praying *more earnestly* in his Agony; sweating Drops of Blood: Hear him crying out, *my Soul is exceeding sorrowful, sore amazed: If it be possible, let this Cup pass from me. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!* And read his Love in Tears, and Groans, and Blood. When the *Jews* saw him weeping over the Grave,
 John xi. 36. as it were of *Lazarus*, Behold, say they, *how he loved him*. Much more Reason have I to remark this, when I see him, not only weeping over, but dying for lost Sinners.

6thly, Nor did his Love terminate and end with his Death: His Government, as Head and Lord of the Church, is a Government of Grace and Love: There is a Vein of Love running through every Dispensation, and filling every Scene of his Providence. What glorious Displays of Love towards Sinners, in their first Conversion, oftentimes! and in his after Conduct of them? The Apostle reflecting on his own Case, that he obtained Mercy, cries out, *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ was exceeding abundant; and in me he shewed all Long-suffering, as a Pattern to them that should hereafter believe*. This was a sort of a Specimen of his Dealings with other injurious, obstinate Sinners. O my Soul! never forget the like Instances of thy Redeemer's Love towards thyself. How long did he wait to be gracious! And in what Methods of rich and sovereign Grace did he at last subdue, and reclaim thee! Oh adore the
 Love

1 Tim. i.
13, 16.

Love that has saved thee ! The Review of this Grace will be part of thy Heaven hereafter ; will supply thy Song to everlasting : Now begin thy eternal Work. And how wonderful the History of his Love ; since with the Prodigal, he brought thee back to thy Father's House ? *He that loveth me, saith Christ, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and manifest myself to him.* John xiv. 21. He not only *has* loved, but *will* love, continue to love ; and as an Evidence of it manifest himself to those he loves ; guiding, restoring, supporting, quickening, comforting them ; *He brings them to his Banqueting-House, where his Banner over them is Love : He satisfieth them with the Fatness of his House, and makes them drink of the Rivers of his Pleasures : He gathers them in his Arms, and carries them in his Bosom ; follows them with a constant and tender Care : And as he washed them from their Sins in his own Blood, he doth in Virtue thereof, intercede for them above, and act the Advocate, in their Behalf, with the Father.* 1 Joh. ii. 1. He knows and pities their Infirmities, sympathizes Heb. ii. 18. with them in their Temptations, Sufferings and —iv. 15. Conflicts.

7tly, Heaven is the Preparation of his Love ; and indeed, 'tis there only that we shall understand how great his Love is ; when we see it in its last Scene, and final Issue. *Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such thing.* Eph. v. 25, 27. This is what he aim'd at in coming from Heaven, viz. that he might advance his Servants and Followers thither ; *He entered Heaven as our Forerunner.* Heb. vi. 20. He tell us, he went to prepare a Place for us ; and that he will come again and receive us to himself ; *that where he is, there we may be also,* John xiv. 23. Heaven is the Price of his Blood (the purchased Possession)

Possession) and the Fruit of his Love: They in Heaven clearly see the Dueness of this Character, *him that loved us*, and accordingly own and adore him for ever.

And thus I have traced the Subject, the Love of my dearest Lord, through several of its more remarkable Instances. Look back, O my Soul! upon them; till thou feelest the Power, the constraining Power of divine Love: And, Lord, look down upon me with a pitying, relieving, helping Eye; dart a Beam of thine own Light; afford a Touch of thy own divine Hand, that I may understand and feel thy Love.

A Third Meditation on the Love of
CHRIST.

AND is this the Love of my Redeemer? Has he loved us, and thus loved us? How great thy Obligation, O my Soul, to love him? Love begets Love; all generous Minds find it so: And indeed it generally softens the hardest Hearts, and overcomes the most untractable Natures, that are least capable of the tender Impressions of Love. How was *Saul*, even in the midst of his Rage against *David*, subdued by an Instance of his generous Kindness? *Is this the Voice of my Son David?* 1 Sam. xxiv. 16, 17, 18, 12 *And Saul lift up his Voice and wept, and he said unto David, thou art more Righteous than I, for thou hast rewarded me Good, whereas I have rewarded thee Evil: And thou hast shewed me this Day, how that thou hast dealt well with me: Forasmuch as when the Lord had delivered me into thine Hand, thou killedst me not. For if a Man find his Enemy, will he let him go well away? Wherefore the Lord reward thee Good,*

Good for that thou hast done unto me this Day. Love is the most powerful Orator : It has irresistible Charms ; can melt down an Enemy, and carry all captive before it. And, O my Soul ! canst thou stand out against the Force of this Love ? the most amazing, glorious, triumphant Love ! Shall an obdurate, abandon'd *Saul* relent, upon a small Expression of *David's* Goodness ; and dost thou remain untouch'd with a Redeemer's Love, in all the surprizing Instances of it ? Canst thou pass through such an History of Love, transcendent, unparallel'd Love, and not be moved, not transported ? Lord, pity my Stupidity, and cure it ; break this Rock ; *take away the Heart of Stone, and give an Heart of Flesh.*

Lament, O my Soul ! the Want of Love, where 'tis so much due, and so well deserved. How do we find ourselves oblig'd, by a small Favour from our Fellow-Creatures ? and if they heap Benefits upon us, and repeat Kindnesses, they make us their Property ; we are so much theirs, that we are scarce any longer our own : But alas ! the Love of my Redeemer has not had this Effect ; tho' it be the greatest, and most beneficial, free, generous, and what carries in it infinite Obligations. How little Influence has it had upon me ? how little do I feel its Power ? Wretch that I am ! any low Instance of Love has more Force and Authority with me, than that Love, which is the Wonder and Song of Saints and Seraphs : Bewail this Obduracy and Insensibility. 'Tis said of a good Man, that often appear'd disconsolate, and would sometimes, in Company, let fall Tears ; that being ask'd the Reason he answer'd, *I can't bring this vile Heart of mine to love the Lord Jesus.* Weep, O my Soul ! over thy vile Heart ; herein vile above Measure, that it can throw away Affections upon every

worthless Object, but has none for a Redeemer ; will not be brought to love the Lord Jesus.

Stir up thy self, O my Soul ! and turn thy Affections into their proper Channel ; direct them to their proper Object ; let the Love of Christ constrain thee ; he has every thing that may invite and engage thy strongest Affections. For Instance, how amiable and excellent his Person : This is represented in the Book of *Canticles*, in a Variety of Metaphors, suitable to the Nature of that Song ; and made one Reason of that Love, which all ought to have, and all truly devout Souls actually have, in a greater or less Degree, to their Lord

Chap. ii. 1. and Husband. *I am the Rose of Sharon*, saith he, *and the Lilly of the Vallies. As the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood*, adds the Spouse, *so is*

Ver. 3. *my Beloved among the Sons*, q. d. “ * Thou art
* Bp. Pat. in loc.

“ more lovely in my Eyes than the greatest
“ Princes in the World, who are no more to be
“ compared with thee, than the wild Trees, that
“ bring forth nothing but Leaves, or only harsh
“ and insipid Trash, with the goodly Apple-tree,
“ when 'tis loaden with its beautiful and pleasant
“ Fruit.” And after a great many affectionate Touches upon his Character, the enamour'd Spouse attempts a more particular and distinct Description of him, Chap. v. ver. 10, — 16. first premising, that *he's chiefest of ten thousands* ; and then concluding, *he's altogether lovely*. “ She finding his Praises to exceed all her Thoughts, sums up all in a
“ Breath, and comprehends his whole Character
“ in this, *That he is all over lovely* ; attracting all
“ Mens Affections ; not only those that saw him,
“ but those that heard of him too.” View, O my Soul ! his Excellencies ; consider the Wisdom of his Doctrine, the Goodness of his Laws, the Grace of his Government ; his Mediatorial Qualifications
and

and Accomplishments ; his Authority as Prophet, Priest and King ; and in all, his Fitness to be the Head, Protector, and Saviour of the Body : *In* ^{1 Cor. i.} *him all Fulness dwells : He's made of God unto us* ^{30, 31.} *Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption ; that he which glorieth, should glory in the Lord.* View him, O my Soul ! in his Essential and Mediatorial Excellency, as the glorious *Immanuel*, as made Man, tabernacling in a human Body ; as invested in the most beneficent Office ; speaking from the Bosom of the Father, and speaking as never Man did. View him in the several Steps of his Humiliation and Triumph ; in all the Acts of his Power, Faithfulness and Grace ; and thou wilt be convinced, that at least, thou oughtest to love him ; wilt condemn thy self if thou love him not ; and hereby wilt learn to love him, and more to love him. Vouchsafe, Lord, to be my Teacher, and kindle the sacred Flame of Love in my Breast.

And as his Person is amiable, so his Love recommends him : How great was that ; how expensive ; how beneficial ! *He hath loved us, and* ^{Rev. i. 5,} *washed us from our Sins in his own Blood, and made* ^{6.} *us Kings and Priests, to God and his Father.* Wash'd us in Blood ! in his own Blood ! Stop here, pause a little : What Love is this ? He hath loved : It is Heaven must tell thee *how* much, explain the Mode. But shall this Love, O my Soul ! have no Effect ; make no Impressions ? If so, thou seemest past Cure, hast the Heart of a Stone, of a Devil ; forfeitest thy very Being, thy Power of living, and deserveest immediate Annihilation ! He hath loved me, and died for me, became my Atonement, Sacrifice and Ransom ; hath rescued me from Hell, raised my Hopes as high as Heaven, and paid my Debts ; knocked off my

Chains, and enrich'd me with high and noble Privileges at present; and purchased for me an eternal Crown! and shall I not love him? I had almost said, let me not live, if I love thee not!

And should it have no Weight with thee, that this is the Character of Christ's Spouse; of all the genuine Members of his Church, the goodly Fellowship of Saints, as well as Army of Martyrs, *Cant. i. 3. that they love him? The Virgins love thee, the Upright love thee.* And in ver. 7, *O thou, whom my Soul loveth!* The Language of the Church, representing the Heart any Spirit of a Christian: Christ is his BELOVED; him whom his Soul loveth, loveth ardently, and above all Creatures, or Creature-Enjoyments. O my Soul! join with these pure, chaste, divine Lovers; don't exclude thyself from this honourable Chorus: 'Tis a sad Mark of Reprobation, and exposes to a tremendous Judgment, to want the Affection that's inseparable from the Spouse of Christ: *If any Man love not the Lord Jesus, let him be Anathema Maranatha.*

Consider farther, how pleasing this Affection to the blessed Jesus; weak, low, and languid as it is. Notwithstanding all its Defects, he accepts it, and even glories in it. *Thou hast ravished my Heart, my Sister, my Spouse! thou hast ravished my Heart with one of thy Eyes, with one Chain of thy Neck.* How fair is thy Love, my Sister, my *Cant. iv. 9, Spouse! how much better is thy Love than Wine, 10, &c.* and the Smell of thy Ointments than all Spices. Infinite Condescension and Grace! And shall thy great Lord thus esteem, thus value thy Love? And wilt thou deny it to him? O my Soul! devote thyself, thy best Powers and Affections to the Honour of thy Redeemer; love him with all thy Heart, and Strength, and Mind.

A Fourth

A Fourth Meditation on the Love of
CHRIST.

I HAVE seen how reasonable it is I should love *Christ*. Endeavour, O my Soul! to give Proof of thy Love; express it in all proper Instances. His Love was not idle and unactive; *he loved, and washed us from our Sins in his Blood*. Let thy Love manifest itself to him in suitable Expressions: Shew thy Love.

(1st,) By high and honourable Thoughts of him. When the Spouse was ask'd, *What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved?* She replies; *My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand; his Head is as the most fine Gold, &c. his Mouth is most sweet; yea, he is altogether lovely: Concluding triumphantly, and by way of Challenge: This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O Daughters of Jerusalem.* Estimation is the Ground of Love; and it is one way of discovering it! Oh, exalt the Lord Redeemer in thy Thoughts; treat him with all Reverence and Veneration!

2dly, By devout Ascriptions: *To him that loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood; to him be Glory and Dominion.* And again, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive Power, Riches, and Wisdom, &c.* Acknowledge the Due-ness of all the Honour the Son of God has received; join with the Church in her Praises; let thy Love this way vent it self. Prostrate thy self before the Throne of the Lamb; he is thy Lord, worship thou him.

3dly, Show it by fervent Desires after his Presence, and after Intercourse with him: How much of this there is in the Temper of devout Souls, they

Rev. i. 5. 6
Chap. v.
12.

they themselves feel better than they can tell to others. 'Tis one main Design of the Book of *Canticles* * to represent this: The Spouse exemplifies it in an eminent Manner, when she enters upon the Conference, which she begins in a Flame of sacred Affection, continu'd in a great Degree thro' that Song. *Let him kiss me with the Kisses of his Mouth.* Him: She doth not say who; but means the Person in her Heart; him whom her Soul loved: And whom her Thoughts were upon, last upon, now upon, and frequently upon. “ *Solomon* (as “ the pious and excellent Dr. *Patrick* observes) “ speaks this in the Person of the Virgin, Daughter of *Sion*, (*i. e.*) the Church; whom he here “ introduces, in the most passionate Strain, wishing for some Token of Love, which is expressed under the Metaphor of a Kiss. But there is “ no Mention at all made of the Name, Condition, or Beauty of the Person, whose Love is “ desired; nor any Account given of the Beginning or Progress of this Desire. But he makes “ her burst out on a sudden, and abruptly into “ these Words; *let him kiss me*, &c. That he might “ the more artificially describe the Nature and “ Force

* Whatever Reference this Book may have to the Coming of the *Messiah* in the Flesh; which *Solomon*, in a prophetick Rapture foresaw, and to the Desires of the *Jewish* Church after that Blessing, which he here describes in Terms of Affection, suitable to so great an Event, and the glorious Privileges thereby brought to the Church: Yet, I doubt not, the inspiring Spirit look'd farther, and designed to represent the spiritual Intercourse there is between Christ and the Church, the heavenly Bridegroom and devout Souls, even to the End of the World; which is done in a divine Song, form'd after the Manner of a pastoral Eclogue, and in a Sort of Dramatick Poem; wherein several Persons are introduced, bearing their Part by Turns, in several Interlocutions, or divine Dialogues.

“ Force of divine Love; which, when it possesses
 “ the Mind, snatches it from itself, that it is whol-
 “ ly in him that it loves: It thinks of nothing
 “ else, seeks nothing, wishes nothing, speaks of
 “ nothing but this alone: and imagines that
 “ every body else thinks of the same, and knows
 “ of whom it speaks.” Divine Love this way
 worketh towards its Object: *Christ dwelleth in the* Cant. v.
Heart of a Believer by Faith and Love; and if he 6, 7.
withdraw himself, deny the usual Tokens of his Fa-
vour, tis an Affliction so real, so heavy, that no earth-
ly Comfort can support under it. Let thy Love, O
my Soul! thus appear in longing Desires, in vi-
gorous Sallies of Affection after him.

4thly, In delighting, in triumphing in his Pre-
 sence, Favour, and Smiles: *We will be glad, and* — i. 4.
rejoice in thee; we will remember thy Love more than
Wine. And to the same Purpose. And again, — v. 13,
He brought me to the Banqueting-House, and his 14, 16.
Banner over me was Love: Stay me with Flagons, — ii. 4, 5.
comfort me with Apples, for I am sick of Love. “ A
 “ Description, saith Dr. Patrick, of one falling
 “ into a Swoon, by the Abundance of her Love;
 “ in which Case Cordial Spices are wont to be
 “ called for to revive such Persons, and keep
 “ them from fainting quite away. Comfortable
 “ Smells also are wont to be administred to the
 “ Nose; which is the meaning of calling here for
 “ fragrant Apples, &c. By all which, the Church
 “ is represented to be so marvellously affected
 “ with the Love of Christ, as to be even op-
 “ pressed under the Weight of divine Benefits,
 “ and at a perfect Loss what to think of them;
 “ having little or nothing to return for such
 “ infinite Obligations.” There is an Enjoy-
 ment of the Blessed God, and of the Lord Jesus,
 even in this Life, which affords a little Heaven
 to

to holy Souls, and as the Earnest of the full Joys above. The Lovers of Christ understand this ;

Chap. iii. know what I mean. *I charge you, O ye Daughters*
 5. *of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake my Love, till he please.* Thus, O my Soul ! express thy Love to thy Redeemer ; reckon that in his

Cant. iii. *Favour is Life, and that his loving Kindness is bet-*
 4. *ter than Life. I found him whom my Soul loved ; I held him, and would not let him go,* saith the Spouse. Cleave to him ; don't willingly part with so great a Treasure ; prefer it to thy chiefest Joy : And if there be any little low Souls that despise these Things, as *Cant* and *Enthusiasm*, pity their Ignorance and Folly : But sure thou knowest better, than to be moved with a flat, insipid Jest, pronounced from the Chair of the Scorners. There's a Loyalty in the Heart of Christ's Spouse, that makes his Love her choicest Cordial and Refreshment. *He is come, he is come,* said a serious Person with a sort of Triumph, after some Distance and Estrangement. Love him, O my Soul ! seek him with the rest of the *Virgins* ; and never think thou lovest him to Purpose, till thou findest his Presence thy Solace, thy Life, thy Heaven.

5thly, Shew thy Love by a Zeal for his Name and Honour ; a Devotedness to his Interest, and a constant Readiness to serve him all the Ways thou canst. *Lovest thou me,* saith Christ to *Peter* ? And then adds, as a special Evidence of his Love,

John xxi. *feed my Lambs, feed my Sheep.* Consider which
 15. 16. way thou mayest advance his Kingdom, and promote the great Design he came into the World for : And let the Zeal of Love carry thee through any Service, how expensive soever, that may be acceptable to him. Lord, quicken me by thy Grace ; may I be able to say, *for me to live is Christ* : May all the Lines of Conversation centre in him ;

him; may I think, contrive, project, speak, act; and live for him, and to him; making it my *Meat and Drink to do his Will*; employing my Time; Talents, all my Faculties and Abilities; all I have and am for his Honour. Grant, Lord, a more abundant Effusion of thy Spirit. Let me feel more the constraining Power of thy Love; enlarge my Heart, and I'll run the Way of thy Commandments.

6thly, Shew thy Love to him, by loving, relieving, succouring, and helping his Members, according to thy Capacities and Opportunities. Oh! may I remember that comfortable, and yet monitory Word: *Forasmuch as ye have done it to Mat. xxv. one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done* 40.

it unto me. There is a Love of Compassion and of Beneficence due to the human Species, as such. *Ὁὐκ ἂν θρασέπω ἀλλ' ἀνθρώπινω*, answered the Philosopher, when one accused him of throwing away his Bounty upon an undeserving Person: *I did it not to the Man, but to Humanity*: But those that bear his Image should be especially dear to us: *He that loved him that begets, loves him also that is begotten.* Lord, may those thou vouchsafest to call *Brethren* be ever dear to me: Help me to love them for thy Sake, and in loving them express my Love to thee.

7thly, Shew it by Obedience to his Commands. This he himself has proposed, as the great Test of our Love: *If a Man love me, he will keep my John xiv. Sayings.* And, *He that loveth me not, keepeth not* 23. *my Words.* Had I the Tongue of an Angel, did Ver. 24. I pretend to the Devotion of a Seraph, it wou'd not prove me a Lover of Christ, without Subjection of Heart to his Authority, and a Life governed by his Precepts. O my Soul! herein be faithful; get the Law of thy Redeemer wrote on thy

thy Heart, and by an even, steady, chearful, constant, universal Obedience manifest thy Love.

8thly, Show thy Love to him by longing to be with him. — It is one Description of the Saints, that they *love his Appearing*. Think with Pleasure of that glorious Day, when thy present Espousals, and Marriage-Contract shall be consummated; wait with Patience, and yet with an earnest rejoicing Hope, still crying out, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, Amen!

2 Tim. iv.
8.

O my Soul! address thyself to this Work; thus to love, and thus to testify thy Love. Christ has loved thee, and so loved, as no Words can express, no Actions of thine fully requite: Never, never forget his Love. *Xenophon* mentions an *Armenian* Prince, who being taken captive, with his Queen by *Cyrus*; and being asked if he desired to have his Liberty, his Kingdom and Queen restored, answered: For my Liberty and Kingdom, I value them not; but if my Blood would redeem my Wife, I would chearfully give it. Afterwards, *Cyrus* having restored him all, he asked his Queen what a one *Cyrus* was; the Lady replied I know not, my Mind was so taken up with the Man, that would give his Life for my Ransom, that I could think of no other. My Lord has actually done what is here said to be *offered only*, and exceedingly out-done it; has ransomed me with his Blood, more precious Blood: May I feel the like Resentment; may he be fixed in my Heart; and may my whole Interest, Power, Life, and all be made a sacred *Holocaust* to him, offered up on the Altar of Love.

On the Crucifixion of CHRIST.

‘*Ο* *Εμὸς ἔργος ἐσαύρωται*, My Love was crucified, said the devout Martyr Ignatius; he that loved me, as some understand him, and whose Nature is Love. And did ever Love break forth in a more glorious Flame! Turn aside, O my Soul! and see this great Sight. And when they were come to the Place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the Malefactors, one on the Right Hand, and the other on the left. *Luke xxii.* THEY CRUCIFIED HIM! Put him to Death *33.* upon a Cross.

Let me consider a little the Nature and Quality of this Death. And (1st.) I may observe, that this Manner of Christ's Death was not an accidental Thing, owing to an hasty Resolution of his Enemies, but appointed of God, and frequently foretold: It was foretold and represented by Types, as by the *brazen Serpent*, which our Lord *Numb. xx.* himself expounds to this Sense. As Moses lifted *9.* up the brazen Serpent in the Wilderness, so must *John iii.* the Son of Man be lifted up. The Paschal Lamb *14.* also seems a Type of the Crucifixion of Christ. The Law expressly ordered, that not a Bone of the *Exod. xii.* Lamb shou'd be broken, which the *Evangelist ap- 46.* plies to this Matter, signifying, that Christ shou'd *John xix.* die a Death, in which the breaking of the Legs *36.* was usual. Some tell us (which makes the Type and Resemblance more lively) that the Spit, on which the Paschal Lamb was roasted, was contrived after the Manner of a Cross; insomuch that the spitted Paschal appeared a sort of a Crucifix. This is mentioned by *Justin Martyr*, and others: So that here we have an early Representation

an early Representation of this great Event : The Lamb of God slain, and even crucified from the Foundation of the World.

It was foretold by Prophecy. *Zachary* speaks of it in the plainest Terms, *They shall look upon him whom they have pierced.* As doth *David*, *They pierced my Hands and my Feet*; which he speaks in the Person of Christ, as is evident from *ver. 1.* *My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?* the very Language of Christ upon the Cross. Christ himself foretold it often, *I, if I be lifted up, &c.* Which he said, signifying what Manner of Death he should die. So that when the Gentiles, and People of *Israel* conspired against Christ, they did no other than what God's Hand and Counsel had determined before to be done; Christ ought to suffer these Things, and enter into his Glory. To suffer, and to suffer these very Things, and in this Manner to die, and to die upon the Cross : This was the Voice of the Law and the Prophets. Behold here, O my Soul ! an Accomplishment of ancient Predictions; an Evidence that Jesus is the Messiah; and let thy Faith rest in him. This is he that was to come, nor needest thou look for another.

2dly, Crucifixion was a Death exquisitely painful. Hence 'tis said, he endured the Cross. The Manner of it in short, was this : His Body was fastened to an erect, and his Hands to a transverse Beam, and both Hands and Feet pierced with Nails; dug, as the Psalmist expresses it. And as these are the most nervous Parts of the Body, they must consequently be more sensible of Pains : And in this Posture he hung upon the Cross for several Hours; dying a languishing Death, and feeling many Deaths in one. Some have thought the curious Frame, and fine Contexture of Christ's Body did make his Sense of Pain

Pain more quick and lively. 'Tis certain, it was to *all* an exceeding painful Death; and therefore the *Romans* borrow the Word, by which they express Torment in their Language, from the Cross; *Cruciatu*s from *Crux*.

3dly, It was a Death *full of Shame* and Ignominy, and therefore proper to Slaves, or Strangers, guilty of the most enormous Crimes. Hence *Cicero* in his Oration against *Verres*, mentions it as an high Offence, that he had caused some *Freemen* to be crucified. "It is a great Fault," saith he, to lay a Freeman of *Rome* in Bonds; "worse to scourge him; and still worse to take away his Life. *Quid dicam in crucem tollere*;" "but what shall I say of crucifying him?" He intimates that this was so great an Indignity offered to a Citizen, that Words could not express the Vileness of him that would be the Contriver and Author of it: and yet this Death did the Son of God submit to. The Lord of the World stoops to be *Crucified*, undergoes the Punishment and Death of a poor Slave, and is content to be number'd with the worst Transgressors!

5thly, It was also a *curfed* Death, *He that is* Deut. xxi. *hanged is cursed of God*. All that suffered that 23. Death, and were hung upon a Tree, were look'd upon as great Sinners, under the Displeasure and Curse of Heaven; and accordingly were thus exposed to the View of the World; *were hung up between Heaven and Earth, as unworthy of either*; nor could they be buried, and have the common Privilege of other Dead, to be covered in the Earth, till they had remain'd for a Time a Spectacle and Warning to the Living. *Christ* in being crucified was thus accursed: He was *made a* Gal. iii. *Curse for us*; herein a Curse. Crucifying was 13. like Gibbetting, as practised among us, and used

very much for the same Ends and Purposes; “ as
 “ a Signification of some heinous Wickedness
 “ committed, and a Monument of publick Ju-
 “ stice and Vengeance against the Offender.” And
 thus was the Son of God dealt with; he was hung
 up between two Malefactors, *and made his Grave*
with the Wicked. Never was so much Innocency
 thus clouded! So much Glory thus obscured be-
 fore! *He endured the Cross, despising the Shame.*

Isa. liii. 6.

Heb. xii. 2.

5thly, There were some Circumstances attend-
 ing the Crucifixion of Christ, that very much
 aggravated the Suffering of it. *Barabbas*, an in-
 famous Transgressor, was preferred before him;
 by which the People declared, as by a publick
 Voice and Suffrage, that bad as *Barabbas* was,
Jesus was worse. He was openly scourged, and
 delivered up to the Rabble to be abused and insult-
 ed; who accordingly, in Derision, put on him a
 Scarlet Robe, and for a Crown, a Wreath of
 Thorns, with a Reed in his Hand for a Sceptre:
 And when they had mocked his Sovereignty, and
 with the utmost Rudeness, made Sport with him;
 they smite him on the Face, and strike him on
 the Head: And having this way sufficiently
 gratified their Malice, they strip him of the Royal
 Robes given him in Scorn; cloath him with his
 own Garments, and so lead him away, with his
 Cross on his Shoulders, to be crucified; when
 he's placed between two Malefactors, the better
 to leave an Impression on the Minds of the People,
 that he was an Impostor, and at least equally guilt-
 y with them: And here (after he had born the
 repeated Insults of the Multitude) he expires; *My*
 39 — 45. *God, my God, (saith he) why hast thou forsaken me?*
 and so gives up the Ghost.

Mat. xxviii

Lord, what shall I say to this! Thoughts are
 swallowed up; what a Mystery, what a Miracle
 of

of Grace and Love! View it, O my Soul! come near, and contemplate with Wonder and Praise. Lord, teach me the proper Lessons of this Doctrine; help me to understand it aright; to apply and improve it aright.

A Second Meditation on the same
SUBJECT.

AND (1st.) how great an Event is this, and with what Reverence shou'd I entertain the Subject! The Son of God, whom all the Angels of God are commanded to worship, hung upon a Cross, loaded with Reproach and Scorn, tortured and racked, bleeding and dying! Never was there such a Spectacle as this offer'd to the Eyes of Mortals! It struck a Sort of Terror into the whole Creation; as we read in the sacred History. *The Sun hid its Face; the Veil of the Temple was rent in twain; the Earth quaked; the Rocks were rent; the Graves opened, and even his Enemies* Mat. xxvii. 45, 51, 52, &c. are seiz'd with Amazement, and made to relent. *Truly this, say they, was a righteous Person, this was the Son of God.* Ver. 45. It would be a Reproach to the Wisdom of God, not to suppose there must be something of high Importance aimed at in this Providence. 'Tis the Part of Wisdom to proportion the Means to the End: There wou'd not have been such a solemn *Apparatus* and Introduction to a Trifle. Can we imagine the blessed God, Righteous, Wise and Holy in all his Works, wou'd have sent his Son into this World, have appointed him to a State of so much Abasement; suffer'd him to have fallen into the Hands of his Enemies; expos'd him to all this Contempt and

U 2

Sorrow;

Sorrow, but upon some great Design! Every Step towards this Event was the Ordination of Heaven, the Contrivance of infinite Wisdom; and the thing itself the chief of the Works of God; the Son of God on the Cross! The Sun could not behold the Tragedy; the Earth trembled under it; it was the Amazement of Angels, and Terror of Devils! View it, O my Soul! with all Reverence. The Apostle determined to know nothing but Christ and him crucified; and indeed the Subject challengeth thy closest Attention.

2dly, Of what infinite Consequence is the Salvation of the Soul? What a Value doth this put upon it? and what Wretch must he be, that makes Light of that which was thus purchased! *We have Redemption, and Salvation thro' his Blood.* This was in general the End Christ died for, viz. To deliver us from Wrath to come, and restore us to the Favour and Enjoyment of God; for this he became a Victim, a Curse, and suffered the Ignominy and Pain of the Cross. And shall I contemn what he thus valued, and neglect what cost him thus dear? May I never despise my own Soul, despise that Blood that purchased it: Surely Salvation is too important a Thing to be jested with. Oh! learn thy own Dignity in the Price of thy Redemption. To save thee, *the Word was made Flesh*, became a Man, and died a Sacrifice: For this he sweat in the Garden, and bled on the Cross. How shall I escape if I neglect so great Salvation!

3dly, What an Abhorrence shou'd this give me of Sin? Retire, O my Soul! to *Gethsemane*; go up to *Golgotha*; set thyself under the Cross of Christ; think over the amazing Tragedy, in all its Circumstances and Particulars; and thence learn the Nature of Sin; read it in its Agonies and Sorrows,

Sorrows, in his bloody Sweat, in his *Lama sabac-thani*: Never doth Sin appear more exceeding sinful, more like itself, an hateful, accursed Thing, than in the Glass of Christ's Sufferings! So detestable is it in the Eyes of God, that he did not think it consistent with the Honour of his Government, to pardon it without a Sacrifice, *and this must be the Blood of his own Son!* He was delivered for our ^{Rom. iv. 25.} Offences, he was bruised for our Iniquities. Tho' he was taken and slain by wicked Hands, our Sins were the procuring Cause. These were the Nails, the Thorns, the Spear that pierced him. " * The * Dr. Barrow. Traitor, which by the Hands of *Judas* deliver'd him up. We were the Persons who, by our Sins did impeach him; the spiteful Priests were but our Advocates. We, by them, did judge and and sentence him; *Pilate* was but our Spokesman. We, by them, did inflict that horrid Punishment on him; the *Roman* Executioners were but our Agents herein. He became a Curse for us, *i. e.* all the Derision, Mockery, and Contempt he endur'd, did proceed from us: The silly People were but Tools, acting our Parts; our Sins were they that cried out, *Crucify him, crucify him*, with Clamours more loud, and more effectual, than did all the Jewish Rabble. It was they that by the Hands of the fierce Soldiers, and rude Populacy, as by senseless Engines, did buffet and scourge him, did pierce his Flesh, and rend his sacred Body: Upon them therefore it is just and fit that we should turn our Hatred, and discharge our Indignation." It was Sin that brought Christ from the Throne to the Cradle, the Manger and the Cross: It was against *that* the divine Justice proceeded; against *that* the divine Displeasure was kindled. O my Soul! let Sin be thy Aversion,

thy Hatred and Dread for ever: A common Execution, in which publick Justice takes place strikes an Awe into Spectators, and begets a Reverence of the Law, and of Authority; and is designed to deter from the like Transgressions, for which the like Vengeance is due. And can I behold the Son of God crucified; a most amazing Instance of divine Justice, and of his Abhorrence of Sin! and not abhor it also? shall I love that which God hates, and manifested his Hatred of, in so great a Degree, as not to spare his own Son, when he stood in the Place of Sinners? He must shed his Blood, or no Remission. Lord, help me to consider the Wounds, the Death, the Cross of my Saviour, the Strictness and Severity of thy Justice, and thence judge what Sin is, and how to stand affected towards it.

4thly, How much Peace and Comfort may
 Rom. viii. this afford the Penitent Believer? *Who is he that*
 34. *condemneth, it is Christ that died? The Cross of*
 Gal. vi. 14 *Christ is the Christian's Triumph. He hath made*
 Col. i. 20. *Peace through the Blood of his Cross. In whom we*
 Ephes. i. 7. *have Redemption thro' his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins.* And canst thou, O my Soul! question this Redemption, this Forgiveness, when 'tis the Price of Blood, and of such Blood! Will he not Pardon Sin? Why then did he appoint and accept a Sacrifice, such a Sacrifice! Oh, dismiss thy Fears and Jealousies; turn unto God and he will abundantly pardon. Christ's Blood is a sovereign Balm for a wounded Spirit: 'Tis a glorious Means of Atonement, a standing Evidence of God's Reconcilableness; a Monument of his rich Mercy and Grace; a Token of his Goodness and Love, and Readiness to bless with all
 Rom. viii. spiritual Blessings in him. *He that spared not his*
 32. *own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he*
 be

be not with him freely give us all Things? After this greater, this comprehensive Foundation-bleſſing, I ſhall never queſtion any leſſer, lower Bleſſing; eſpecially when the former was a Pledge of the latter, and deſign'd to purchaſe and inſure it. He that gave his Son, and delivered him up to be crucified for thee, won't deny any Thing elſe that's good for thee.

6thly, What an Argument this to an Indifferen-
cy to the preſent World, to a Contempt of its
Pomps and Pleaſures? The Son of God paſſed
through Poverty, Reproach, Perſecution, and at
laſt expired upon the Croſs! His Employment
was that of a *Carpenter*, his Eſtate the Basket, and
the charitable Contributions of his mean Fol-
lowers; his Titles, Wine-biber, Friend of Pub-
licans and Sinners; Traitor, Deceiver, Dæ-
moniack, Beelzebub, &c. His Scepter a Reed;
his Crown Thorns; his Life, Hunger, Thirſt,
Wearineſs; and his Death Crucifixion! This was
the State of Things with the Son of God; which
affords us a full Conviction of the Truth of what
he ſaith. *My Kingdom is not of this World.* O my John xviii.
Soul! ſeekeſt thou great Things for thyſelf? Seek ^{36.}
them not; dream not of Eaſe, Honour and Hap-
pineſs here below; to affect them is incongruous
for the Diſciples of a crucified Jeſus: And indeed
to fall into the *Jewiſh* Fancy of their *Ben David*,
a temporal, triumphant Monarch. Chriſt the
Head of the Church was abaſed and humbled; his
Members muſt be, in this reſpect, in a great
Meaſure, conform'd to him: *suffer with him, that* Rom. viii.
they may be glorified together. O my Soul! look ^{17.}
at the Croſs and be inſtructed: *Cogitemus Crucem
ejus & divitias lutum putabimus*, ſaith the Father:
Let us meditate on the Croſs of Chriſt, and we
ſhall trample the Riches and Glories of this World

as Dirt under our Feet. “ If with the Eyes of
 “ our Minds, saith one, we do behold our Lord,
 “ hanging naked upon a Gibbet, besmeared with
 “ his own Blood, groaning under extream An-
 “ guish of Pain, encompassed with all sorts of dis-
 “ graceful Abuses ; will not the Imagination of
 “ such a Sight dim the Lustre of all earthly Gran-
 “ deurs and Beauties, damp the Sense of all car-
 “ nal Delights and Satisfactions ? &c.” Lord,
 may I be a true Disciple of the Cross ; dead to the
 Flatteries and Vanities of this World. Grant me
 the Humility and Mortification thy Cross preaches.
 May I learn of thee, who wast meek and lowly ;
 glory in thy Cross, and thereby become crucified
 to the World, and the World to me !

7thly, How powerful a Motive doth this afford
 to Gratitude and Obedience ? This is an Instance
 of Love full of Wonder. Oh ! may it have equal
 Constraint : What Service should I grudge for
 my dearest Lord, who thought not a Crucifixion
 too costly an Evidence of his Love to me ? O my
 Soul ! look to a bleeding, dying Saviour ; place
 thy self under his Cross ; view him in all his Cir-
 cumstances of Ignominy and Sorrow : remember
 this he suffer’d on thy Account, and thence infer
 thy Obligations to him. Let this Instance of his
 Obedience be the Example and Motive of thine :
 Love him, live to him, who has thus loved and
 died for thee, so that henceforth that may be thy
*Motto. Christus Crucifixus Cordifixus ; My Love
 was Crucified.*

And thus I have offer’d some Specimens of the
 more perfect, compleat Method of Meditation ; not
 that I expect that every one, or indeed any one,
 in the stated Course of their Closet Devotions,
 should imitate these Patterns : But as the Subjects
 I have chosen are of the greatest Importance, I
 thought

thought*it might not be unacceptable to some Readers, to find them enlarg'd upon, tho' it be more than is necessary to my particular Design, which was to give Examples of Meditation, as to Method and Order especially. What I expect from the more intelligent Christians, and recommend to them, if they attempt any thing this Way, is that they proceed in some such Method. First explain their Subject, then prove, illustrate, and so go on to admonish and expostulate with themselves; form Resolutions, Soliloquies, Colliloquies, &c. as the Matter may require; which may be done in more or fewer Essays at different times; and with greater or less Exactness, according to their different Abilities, Furniture, Leisure, and Frame of their Minds. And if after all, these Specimens be thought less fit for Imitation, I would willingly hope the Matter of them will not be without Instruction to the Generality of Christians, on which Account they will more readily excuse them.

~~~~~\*~~~~~

## S E C T. IX.

*I now proceed to some Specimens or Examples of Meditation in a looser Method, which the more judicious Christians may be able in some Measure to imitate, at least in their better Hours, and most devotional Frames; I mean as to the Method and Order, how much soever they fall short as to the Stile and Thought.*

## Of G R A C E.

1 COR. XV. 10. *By the Grace of God I am what I am.*

SOME have been pleased to observe that nothing is more talked of by Christians, especially

First Specimen.



cially since the Days of St. *Austin*, than Grace, and yet that nothing is less understood. The *Jesuit*, no question thought himself witty, that said Grace was *nescio quid*, an unintelligible imaginary Thing, a supposed something, but no Body knows what. Nor are they content to reduce it to a mere Name, a Sound without Meaning; but the very Name is become contemptible with many, treated with a sort of Ridicule as a Term of Cant, only fit for *Enthusiasts*, or at best dull old fashioned Divines.

Others retain the Word, have it frequently in their Mouth, but grossly abuse it; debasing the Idea of it, and turning it into a Jest. Grace with them only stands for good Husbandry, frugal Management in following the Affairs of this World: If it please God, say they speaking of their Children, to give them Grace; when they manifestly intend no more than a sort of secular Wisdom or Sagacity, Care to improve their Patrimony, to get or save an Estate. This is Grace with them, all they seem to desire or have any notion of. Shameful Prostitution! O my Soul, enter not thou into their secret! Surely Grace is too divine, too sacred a Thing to be thus trifled with: And indeed when I find it standing in my Bible with such high Characters; find such great Things every where ascribed to it, the Interests and Comforts of the Church so much carried on and served by it, I can't but look upon it as *venerable*, and accordingly would entertain it: Help me, O my God, better to understand this divine and glorious Subject; afford me some Rays of the Light; the present Assistance of thy Grace, that I may celebrate and praise it in a due Manner, and set forth the Wonders thereof.

Grace is a Term of different Acceptation in  
Scripture,

Scripture, particularly in the new Testament, where it more frequently occurs. It often signifies the *favour and good Will of God*. *Thou hast found favour*, or *Grace with God*. *Jesus increased in favour*, or *Grace, with God and Man*. The *Grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant*, and thus we are said to be *called by his Grace*, to be *justified by his Grace*, to have *Redemption through the Blood of Christ, according to the Riches of his Grace, to be saved by his Grace*. Grace is the divine Benevolence with the Effects and Fruits of it; the Goodness of God issuing forth towards his Creatures: As it respects the Indigent and Necessitous, it may be called Bounty; as it respects the Guilty and Miserable, it is Mercy; as it respects the Unworthy, it is Grace. In a Word, Grace is the divine Love, under the Notion of acting freely.

Grace sometimes signifies the Gospel; as *Rom. vi. 14. Ye are not under the Law but under Grace*, that is, under the Gospel: And the same Sense it has, *2 Cor. vi. 1. Tit. ii. 12.*

It sometimes signifies the divine Power exerted in the Hearts of Men; the Influences and Operations of God's Spirit enlightning, quickning, renewing, changing, &c. And this may be consider'd either in the first special Instance, as at Conversion; or as displayed in the after Conduct and Supply of the Soul. The former is called by some Divines *Gratia operans*, Grace working in us; the latter *Gratia cooperans*, Grace working with us, the Terms being borrowed from the Schools. The Scripture affords Instances of both: Of the former, *Gal. i. 15—called me by his Grace*, *Acts xviii. 27.—helped them much who had believed through Grace*: Of the latter, *1 Cor. xv. 10. I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I,*  
but

*but the Grace of God which was with me.* If any object against the Interpretation of these Texts, the Thing it self pleaded for is frequently asserted Phil. ii. 13. in other Scriptures, *it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his own good Pleasure.* The Heb. xiii. God of Peace *make you perfect in every good Work,* 21. *working in you that which is well-pleasing in his* Acts xvi. *Sight, through Jesus Christ. The Lord opened* 14. *Lydia's Heart. We are said to be his Workman-* Eph. ii. 10. *ship, created in Christ Jesus unto good Works, to be* Pl. cx. 3. *willing in the Day of his Power. The Day of* Eph. i. 19. *Power is the Day of God's Grace; when he puts forth the exceeding greatness of his Power towards them that believe. This is one Notion of Grace; it signifies the divine Concurrence and Assistance; the divine Agency and Influence upon the Hearts of Men, by which they are quickened, enlightened, transformed, and afterwards established, conducted, furnished for all the Duties of their* —iii. 16. *Course and Warfare. God strengthens us by his Spirit with might in the inward Man.*

Grace sometimes signifies a divine Quality or Temper produc'd in us; the Effect of God's powerful Operation: As when we are bid to *grow in* 2 Pet. iii. 18. *Grace, to be strong in the Grace that is in Christ* 2 Tim. ii. 1. *Jesus.* And thus Grace is the same with *the divine* 2 Pet. i. 4. *Nature.* The several *Fruits of the Spirit* mention- Galat. v. -xxii. 23. *ed, as Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentle-* *ness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, and Temperance,* are Graces; so many distinct and particular Graces; divine Habits of the Mind, which the Holy Spirit implants and worketh in us. I don't think it worth while to dispute whether it be most proper to call them *moral Virtues or Graces*: As they are the Fruit of the Spirit, have him for their Author, they are divine in their Rise, Nature, and Tendency, and saving in their Issue, are



are perfectly the same Thing, whatever Name we give them: Lord grant me these Excellencies, all of them, and all in fuller Measure; and I shall think my self happy; nor will it make any difference in my Estimation or Enjoyment, whether we call them Graces or Virtues.

This is the Scripture Account of Grace. I'm sensible some make it a Question whether there be sufficient Reason for all this Distinction; and are ready to determine that Grace means nothing else in Scripture, but the Favour and Kindness of God: It may be the Matter might be accommodated with them by Concession not injurious to Truth; that this is the strict and proper Notion of Grace, and what runs thro', and may be preserv'd in all the Instances that have been mentioned. Thus the Gospel is called Grace, as it is an eminent Discovery of the Favour and good Will of God towards Sinners. The divine Energy and Operation upon the Heart is Grace, on the same Account, as it flows from the divine Favour and Goodness, was excited and influenc'd thereby, both in the Beginning and Process of the Work. The several particular Virtues that adorne the Mind of the Believer; all these are Grace, Expressions of divine Favour and Goodness: So that tho' Grace is apply'd to different Things in Scripture, there's no need to depart from the primary Notion of it. The Gospel is Grace; the Operation of the Spirit on the Hearts of Men, and the Effects thereof in inward Regeneration, and in all the Parts of the new Creature are Grace; each of 'em, all of 'em may be termed Grace, as in them all the Love and Kindness of God our Saviour appears.

And oh my God! how much am I a Debtor to thy Grace: help me to recount my Obligations; often to renew the History of it, with that  
humble,



humble, admiring, adoring thankfulness that becomes me: *By the Grace of God I am what I am.* I had been nothing, worse than nothing, without thy Grace; a carnal, secure, stupid Creature; sinful, sensual, every Way vile; a lost undone Creature, with the Heart of a Brute here, and of a Devil hereafter! Pause, O my Soul! and look back a little on the Wonders of divine Grace, the surprizing Story of it with all dutiful and loyal Ascriptions, still saying, Oh, that I could say it with suitable Devotion, *By the Grace of God I am what I am.*

'Tis by the Grace of God that I am a Christian, that I enjoy the Light and Teaching, and the many Advantages of the Gospel Dispensation; that the Sun of Righteousness has arose upon me with healing in his Wings; while so many sit in Darkness, and in the Region and Shadow of Death: Lord this is an Act of thy Favour and Kindness, a Distinction of thy Providence; may I not receive thy Grace herein in vain.

'Tis by the Grace of God that I am a Convert, transform'd by the renewing of my Mind; have been brought to engage, heartily to engage in the Service, and made to taste the Comforts of the Gospel; have been enclin'd to take Christ's easy and honourable Yoke upon me; and that whilst others stand in the Market-place all the Day idle; only play and trifle with a dull Form of Religion; are not initiated by any internal teaching and divine Unction: Which alas! is the Case of great Numbers, that have had the same external Means and Helps with myself; the same Bible and Ministry; and of some it may be that have had the same Parents and Education: And who has made me to differ? Thy Grace, oh my God! Not my Will or Wisdom, but thy Conduct; not my Merit,

rit, but thy Mercy. Thou hast turned me from Darknes to Light, open'd my Heart, directed my Choice; for this I owe thee the highest Praises, in Heaven I shall praise thee. *By the Grace of God I am what I am.*

'Tis by the Grace of God that I have any of the Ornaments of a real Saint, a true Believer. Oh that herein I may not be mistaken! that I am distinguished by any of the Fruits of the blessed Spirit. Lord thy Power, thy Grace has planted these in my Soul. My Faith is of thy Operation. Thou hast begotten me again to a lively Hope. Thou hast shed abroad thy Love in my Heart, thro' the Holy Ghost, which thou hast given me: Once I was a Servant of divers Lusts and Pleasures defiled and polluted; thou hast washed and cleansed me, hast made me *all glorious within*, and granted me the *Clothing of wrought Gold*. I own thy Hand and adore thy Grace herein.

'Tis by the Grace of God that I have been supported under all my Burdens and Conflicts, preserved in all my Temptations, Dangers and Fears: How many, how great the Salvations God has wrought out for me thro' my Course and Life? I remember at such a Time a Concurrence of Exercises and Troubles exceedingly threatned me. *12 Cor. i. said my Foot slippeth, and then thy Mercy held me up.*<sup>8.</sup>

I was *pressed out of Measure above Strength, insomuch that I despaired of any Comfortable Issue*. But thou, Lord, *hast delivered my Soul from Death, my Eyes from Tears and my Feet from falling*. I remember the perplexed Thoughts, the gloomy Prospects I had; *without were Fightings, within were Fears*: But God, who comforteth those who are cast down, comforted me. I remember the Means, the Manner and Circumstances of this great Deliverance; to thy Name, O Lord, be the

Praise—

Praise—— At such a Time I was in the midst of Snares and Temptations, and was preserved by a Wonder of Providence and Grace, without seeing my Danger till it was over. God has often saved me by opening my Eyes that I might discern the Snares spread for me: This may not be intelligible to every Christian, but some I doubt not know how to fill up the Vacancy. And I mention it as a Hint that we should record the more remarkable Instances of divine Grace and Providence towards us in our Deliverances, and frequently have Recourse to them for enlivening our Devotion. In this Instance he has saved me by shutting them, that I might not be taken by the Bait prepared: Oh! may I never forget the Wisdom and Sovereignty of Grace herein, nor overlook the divine invisible Hand, that was my Defence and Rescue!

'Tis by the Grace of God that I have been assisted in, and carried through all my Work and Duty as a *Christian*: This has supplied me for the several Services of my Warfare, I cannot say I have laboured *abundantly*, much less *more abundantly* than others; but if I have laboured at all for God, and for the Interest of my own Soul; done any thing with Success in Religion, I have the greatest Reason to say, *Not I, but the Grace of God that was with me.*

It is by the Grace of God that I have been conducted and led hitherto. This directed me to and in Religion; to the Profession I have engaged in, and in many Circumstances thereof. This has directed me in particular Difficulties and Straits: Often have I been at a Loss concerning my Duty; and upon serious Application to God he has disentangled my Thoughts; taken me by the Hand and pointed out to me the Way that I should choose. I have had so much Experience  
of



of his special Light and Guidance, in several remarkable Instances of this Nature, that I can never question it, and desire never to forget it. Lord, I resign all to thy Conduct; leave all my Affairs and Concerns with thee for the future: Guide me by thy Counsel, and afterwards receive me to Glory.

It is by the Grace of God that I have persever'd held on my Way (oh that I could say with more Evidence I have waxed stronger and stronger!) that I have stood my Ground in the Christian Profession, not made Shipwreck of Faith and a good Conscience: How much in Danger at such a Time? and at such a Time! when——But having obtained Help of the Lord, I continue unto this Day. I adore thy Grace herein, oh my God! may I believe to the saving of my Soul.

'Tis by the Grace and Favour of God that I enjoy the many Privileges, Dignities and Blessings of the Christian State and Covenant; that I am pardoned, justified, adopted; have the Teaching, Discipline and Comforts of God's Family; the Refreshments and Delights of his House; the Protection and Ministry of his Angels; the Promise and Prospect of a future Heaven: Lord help me to celebrate thy Grace; it has been my Salvation, it shall be my Song for ever.

### Of GRACE.

GAL. i. 15. *Called me by his Grace.*

I Can't but think the Distinction, common in Second Spee  
 Books of Divinity, pertinent and grounded cimen.  
 upon Scripture, of an *external* and *internal* Call:  
 Our Saviour seems to hint at it, *Many*, says he, *are* Matt. xx.  
*called, but few are chosen.* Many have the external 16.  
 that want the internal Call. Hence whole Churches Rom. i. 6,  
 and 7.



and Communities of Christians are represented in Scripture, *as called*; particularly the *Romans*. 'Tis not improbable but most of 'em had the internal saving Call, (effectual Grace more ordinarily attending the Dispensation of the Gospel at that Time,) but some no question had only the outward Call.

According to this Distinction the Church of Christ receives a different Denomination, *of visible and invisible*: All that are professed Members of the Church; who are enter'd into it by Baptism, and own the Institutions and Laws of the Gospel, make the *visible Church*: Such as are sincere in their Profession, who not only confess with the Mouth, but believe with the Heart, are the *invisible Church*. The one are the *Tares*, the other the *Wheat*. The one the foolish, the other the wise Virgins; as in the Gospel Parables. Both make a Profession; both carry their Lamps, and go forth to meet the Bridegroom; but the one have Oil, lasting Oil, in their Vessels with their Lamps, which the other have not. *God has called them by his Grace*; and these are term'd the *invisible Church*: Because their Faith, Hope, Love, Fear, all the glorious Ornaments of their Minds, the great Principles of their Obedience, are *invisible* and out of Sight. Their Profession is open and seen, as well as that of others: but their inward Principles, by which they are distinguished, lie concealed. *The World knows us not*. The Lord knows, and he only, who are his.

1 John iii.  
5.

'Tis indeed no small Privilege to be a Member of the visible Church; to have a Station in God's Church, tho' it be only in the *outer Courts*, and as a Candidate for Religion: And among other Mercies of my Life I would be thankful for this; that I was born in a Christian Country, early instructed in the Doctrines, Principles and Duties of the Christian Religion, and by sacred Baptism enter'd among the Disciples and Followers of the Lord

Lord Jesus; that I have had the Admonition, Discipline, Teaching, and Example of Christian Parents; that I have sat at the Posts of Wisdom's Gates; have enjoy'd the Holy Bible, and the several Advantages of God's House and Ordinances. I bless thee, oh my God! for this Distinction of thy Favour; *for the Call of thy Providence* into thy Church.

But I would not rest here: This Call, if I attain no further will leave me short of Heaven. *Mat. vii.* 'Tis the *internal Call*, that distinguishes the true *21, 22, 23.* Christian from the Hypocrite, the Members of *xxv. 11,* the *invisible Church*, from common Professors, or *12.* the mere Members of the *visible Church.* Lord *1 Cor. x. 1-6.* grant me this Distinction; touch my Heart by thy Spirit, and enthrone thy self there.

This Call the Scripture represents in different Terms and under different Notions; as by being born again by Repentance, Conversion, a new Heart, being transform'd by the renewing of the Mind, the Circumcision of the Heart, partaking of the divine Nature, &c. The same Thing is intended in all this Variety of Expression. When God calls any by his Grace there is a universal Change made in the Temper and Frame of the Mind; in the Judgment, Will, Affections, and a new State introduc'd in the Soul. And 'tis of this Call the Apostle speaks in his own Case. *God Gal. i. 15.* *called me by his Grace*; not only by his Favour, but by his powerful Operation, as appears from the History of that Matter, *Acts ix.* And surely never was there a more illustrious Display of Sovereign powerful Grace! In the midst of his Rage and Fury, he's laid prostrate in an instant, brought to the Foot of Christ with the lowest Submission, saying, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* One Word from Heaven disarms him of all his Enmity, turns a Pharisee into a Christian, Persecutor

Eph. ii. 10.

Jam. i. 18.

Acts xvi.

14.

into a Preacher ! 'Tis granted there was something extraordinary in the Manner and Circumstances of this Conversion ; yet every Christian experiences the same Grace in Kind ; has the same effectual, powerful Call : *We are his Workmanship created in Christ Jesus. Of his own Will begat he us by the Word of Truth.* Lydia's Heart was opened as well as that of the Apostle Paul. And the like may be affirmed of every Believer, every genuine Member of the Christian Church, it has pleased God to call him by his Grace.

How God operates on the Mind and Will, is a Question not easy to be resolved ; but we must not deny every thing, the Manner of which we don't understand. We don't know how Body and Soul, Matter and Spirit are in vital Union, so that they have a mutual Influence upon one another ; the Spirit working by the Body, and using its Organs at Pleasure, commanding by a Thought and Act of the Will the several Members thereof. This is Fact, and what no Man will dispute, and yet what no wise Man will undertake to explain : We are satisfied so it is, but how it is we know not ; and indeed should be ready to deny it *could be*, but that we are sure it is : What Wonder then if we are puzzled, and are forced to own Mystery in things of an higher and more exalted Nature, in the Manner of one Spirit's acting upon another ? *The Wind bloweth where it listeth, saith our Saviour, and thou hearest the Sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth, and so is every one that is born of the Spirit.* The working of God's Spirit is secret and mysterious, not so discernible in itself as in its Effects : What have I done, says *1 Kin. xix. Elijah to Elisba, when he cast his Mantle upon*  
*19. 20. him,* and he was thereupon immediately determined



mined to follow the Prophet. What God does to us when he calls us by his Grace ; how he touches the Heart, and bows the Will, and gives an effectual Turn to the Soul, is above us fully to explain. The Work itself is certain, experienced and known by good Men, manifest by the happy Consequences of it, however abstruse and mysterious as to the Manner.

We may conclude in general that God works upon us in a Way suitable to our Faculties. The Will can't be forc'd, that's a Contradiction; not must we suppose, that it's determined by mere physical Power, without Argument or Conviction : What if one conceive of the Matter thus, *When God is by his Grace reclaiming a Sinner, and setting up his Throne in the Heart, he begins, as in the first Creation, with a fiat Lux, let there be Light, shines in upon the Understanding ; removes Prejudices, represents the Concerns of Religion in their Reality, Importance and Necessity, holds them before the Eyes of the Mind, awakens and fixes the Attention to them, and so by the Force of Light attracts and subdues the Heart* : This, or something of this Nature, I reckon, is what we intend by Grace, so far at least as I can explain it ; not denying in the mean time any more direct and immediate Influences upon the Will. 'Tis certain the Obstinacy and Enmity of that must be overcome ; whether this is done by the Power of divine Light *only*, now filling the Mind, or by more immediate Influences upon that Faculty itself, I cannot determine and shall not debate.

The Means God makes use of in this Work, and his Manner of proceeding therein, are various and different ; sometimes the Word read or heard ; sometimes a special Providence ; a sharp Affliction, or eminent Deliverance ; one or other, it may be



Dan. ii. 1.

all of these successively, are the Monitors; hereby the Sinner is made to pause, stand still, and consider; and often the Mind is so far impress'd, that like *Nebuchadnezzar* in his *Dreams*, his *Sleep breaketh from him*. And now Conscience being rous'd, and at leisure, the Noise and Importunity of present Things suspended, and for a while silenced, the Spirit of God does his Office; reads grave and serious Lectures, lays open former Delusions, represents the Danger and Folly of a sinful Course with suitable Life; points out the Way of future Duty and Safety: Whereupon it may be there's an immediate Resignation and Compliance: The awakened Sinner becomes prostrate and cries out, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* being disposed at this Time, under such Discipline and divine Influence, to sign a Blank; do every thing, any thing God shall appoint.

Sometimes the Work is done *more gradually*, and by Way of Treaty. The Soul is summon'd to surrender, beats a Parley; appears willing to hearken to Overtures of Peace; makes some good Essays in Religion; retireth, prayeth, &c. but the good Mood goes off; the Devil gains Advantage, and all issues in nothing except some faint Purposes and Promises for the future; a common Delusion by which awaken'd Sinners shake off their present Convictions: Afterwards, by the same, or it may be different Means, the Conviction is revived, and the Treaty renewed; and yet too often without Success: The unhappy Creature hearkens to his Enemies, and like *Pharaoh* hardens his Heart and returns to Folly. And thus the Matter may remain a considerable while before the Victory is won, the Sinner subdued, and God takes Possession of the Soul by his Grace. Sometimes the Work is accomplish'd *in a gentle mild Way*;

*Way*; and sometimes with *more Terror and Bondage*; with a long Apparatus of Convictions, and amazing Visions and Apprehensions of Wrath. We have Instances of all this Variety in Scripture; as in the Call of some of Christ's first Disciples, of the Apostle *Paul*, the Jaylor, *Zaccheus*, *Lydia*, the Prodigal in the Parable, &c. which I reckon may be looked upon as Specimens, Examples, and a sort of Types of future Conversions. But however the Work is done 'tis certain God is the Author of it. He *calls by his Grace*: It receives its Rise, Progress and Perfection from a divine Hand: He *beginneth a good Work* Phil. i. 6. *in us*, and performeth it unto *the Day of Christ Jesus*.

Oh my Soul! look to him as the Author and Finisher of thy Faith, in this as well as in other respects; review thy own Experiences in this Matter; enquire into the Evidences and Testimonies of thy Change. Has God called thee by his Grace? added the internal to the external Call? If so, fall before him with humble Adoration: 'Tis so important, so necessary and glorious a Work, that thou canst never be enough thankful for it: 'Tis the Beginning of a new, a divine Life; the Pledge and Earnest of eternal Life. The Apostle uses it as an Argument with *Philemon* to admit his Intercession in behalf of *Onesimus*, that *he owed him even his own self*. It seems he had been the Instrument of his Conversion and Call, and he signifies this was of such Consequence, that it gave the very Instrument a sort of Title to him; intimating moreover that before his Conversion he was *lost and worthless*; was not himself, had not himself, and that it was divine Grace that restored him to himself: So in the Parable, *This my Son was dead and is alive, was lost and is found*: 24. Luke xv.

Philemon.  
Ver. 19.

Hast thou, oh my God ! called me by thy Grace ; on this Account, as well as others, *I owe thee even my ownself* : I was dead, thou hast made me alive ; I was lost, thy Grace has found me ; reclaimed and recovered me, restored me to the proper Use and Employment of my Faculties ; brought me to live the Life of a reasonable Creature ; fitted me to move in the Sphere in which thou hast set me, and answer the End for which thou hast made me : How depraved, degenerate and ill was I ? all Disorder, Confusion and Tumult within ; Reason deposed, Sense and Appetite advanced to its Throne ; foolish, disobedient, serving divers Lusts and Pleasures, reprobate to every good Work ; but God called me by his Grace. Lord, I adore the Grace that has saved me. 'Tis by thy Grace *I am what I am, I owe thee myself* : Help me to devote myself to thee ; that as thou hast given me the Possession and Enjoyment of myself, all I have and am may henceforth be sacred unto thee, be thine entirely and for ever.

### Of GRACE.

1 Tim. i. 14. *And the Grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant.*

[ Third Specimen.

EVERY Christian is so much indebted to the Grace of God, that methinks he should take a particular Pleasure in celebrating and praising it. The Curious have their Emblems and Devices, with proper Motto's, by which they design Instruction, and Admonition suitable to the Subject they would adorn, and often therein they point out their own Tempers, State and Circumstances, and intend a Testimony of Gratitude,



titude. No *Molto* certainly better fits the Christian, than that the Apostle furnishes him with, and seems to have chosen for himself, *By the Grace of God I am what I am.* Lord, it is by thy Grace that I am *any* thing, can do *any* thing that is good, and enjoy any thing that is comfortable. From this I have derived my past Blessings, on this depend my future Hopes. Had I the Faculties of a Seraph, the Tongue of Men and Angels, all would be too little to set forth the Riches and *exceeding Abundance* of thy Grace; it has followed me all my Days, filled my whole Life, every Scene and State of it; pardoning, supporting, delivering, conducting and saving me. *I will bless thee, oh God, my King, and praise thy Name for ever and ever.* But among all the kind and endearing Expressions of it, the first special Instance in my Conversion, or Call, is worthy of the greatest Acceptation; and demands my most thankful Acknowledgments; herein the Grace of my Lord was *exceeding abundant*: Help me to contemplate it often, to look back upon it, for the quickening my Love, Gratitude and Obedience.

I have the great Apostle for my Monitor and Example here. He was a constant Advocate for Grace in all his Writings; but seems to single out this Instance, as a Subject to exercise his warmest Affections. Accordingly he returns to it on all Occasions, and goes through the History of it with much Devotion, *Acts xxii, xxvi.* And to the same Purpose, *1 Cor. xv. 8, 9, 10.* *Last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time; for I am the least of the Apostles, that am not meet to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God; but by the Grace of God I am what I am, &c.* And again, *Who was* <sup>*1 Tim. i.*</sup>  
*before* <sup>*13, 14, 16.*</sup>



*before a Blasphemer, a Persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained Mercy. And the Grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant. For this Cause I obtained Mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all Long-suffering, for a Pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to Life everlasting. How was his Heart filled with the Subject; it seems too big for his Expression, I obtained Mercy. The Grace of God was exceeding abundant. And for this Cause I obtained Mercy, that in me first he might shew forth all Long-suffering. He seems to think himself the first greatest Instance of Grace, and a sort of Pattern and Specimen, according to which God would proceed to other chiefest of Sinners. And am not I another Example of the like Grace, exceeding abundant Grace? In me, secondly, God has shewn forth all Long-suffering. Bless the Lord, O my Soul! though thou canst not rise up to the Notes of this great and good Man, join in his Song, however, in the best Manner thou canst. Unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be Honour and Glory for ever and ever.*

The Apostle might have something peculiar in the Circumstances in which the Grace of God found him, and in the Manner of his Call; if my Case be not exactly parallel to his, I am sure it is such, as requires the utmost Gratitude from me, and very much illustrates the Grace of God. I was before, if not a Blasphemer, a Persecutor, yet many ways *injurious*, to God, my Neighbour, and myself; polluted, vile, a Sinner before the Lord exceedingly; I cannot reflect upon my past Course, but I am ready to stand amazed at my own Guilt, and at the Grace that saved me. I was born of Parents professing the Christian Religion, and who were, in some good Measure,

Measure, exemplary therein ; had from them much good Instruction, many seasonable Admonitions, was brought up under the constant Preaching of the Gospel, heard many useful, serious Sermon ; particularly from Mr.— but all in vain, and to no purpose. I was often told of my Duty, put upon Prayer, reprov'd for my Faults, but without Effect. I still harden'd my Neck, and continued in Folly. 'Tis my Unhappiness and Loss, that I have so imperfect a Memory of this dark, uncomfortable Scene of Life. I'm sorry I did not sooner, and more particularly record it. This I certainly know of it, that it was wholly made up of Vanity, Folly, and Sin ; I lived without God in the World, casting off Fear, and restraining Prayer. I remember particularly that I made no Conscience of the horrid Sin of Lying ; but was always ready to invent a Lye to disguise a Fault. I was often guilty of the heinous Sin of — I remember, so little Reverence had I for Religion, notwithstanding my Education, that I sometimes laugh'd at a good Man, Mr.— for his serious Prayers and Discourse, and called it *Whining*. How justly might such a profane Mouth have been stopp'd in the Dust ; such a wicked Mind immediately plung'd in Hell ! I remember the extreme Danger I was in at such a Time, when I was a Companion of Fools, and my Inclination led me to join myself to *certain lewd Fellows of the baser Sort*. I remember I was visited with a Sickness, in which all my Friends despair'd of Life. This I was put in mind of afterwards, and of the Mercy of God in my Deliverance ; but was so far from being affected with it, that I ridicul'd the kind and faithful Monitor. This, *and much worse*, belongs to the Story of my past Life ; And yet *I obtained Mercy* ; it pleas'd  
God

God to stop me in my Course of Ignorance and Enmity; to open my Eyes, touch my Heart, and *call me by his Grace*: Shall I not say, have I not the utmost Reason to say, *the Grace of the Lord Jesus was exceeding abundant! That in me he hath shewn forth all Long-suffering.* I had been in Hell, Lord, had not thy Mercy prevented, and *pluck'd me as a Fire-brand out of the Burning.* How to estimate my Deliverance and thy Grace therein, I know not, much less to express my Gratitude in suitable Strains. May thy Grace perfect what it has begun, bring me to Heaven; then I shall praise thee, and thither I refer the Work.

### Of GRACE.

ACTS xxvi. 19. *I was not disobedient unto the heavenly Vision.*

Fourth Specimen.

THE Call of this great Apostle, which he here relates at large before *Agrippa*, and elsewhere acknowledges with so much Devotion; as *1 Tim. i. 13*, &c. had in it something extraordinary. As he was upon his Journey to *Damascus*, with a Commission in his hand for persecuting the Church of Christ, he was struck down to the Ground by a Light from Heaven; from whence he heard an awful Voice, that of the Lord Jesus, whose Servants and Followers he was treating with so much Violence. The Voice attain'd the End for which it was sent; was accompanied with so much Power and Authority, that it commanded his Attention, and reached his Conscience. Nor does he resist the divine Arm, now revealed; *he was not disobedient to the heavenly Vision*; but yields  
 ACTS ix. 6. himself a willing Captive. Lord! says he, *what wilt*



*wilt thou have me to do?* How sovereign and victorious the Grace of God! Lord, that thou madest the Heart, has an immediate Access to it; canst open and subdue it with a Word. When thou wilt work, who shall lett? Thy Council shall stand, and thou wilt do all thy Pleasure.

Nor was this a transient Conviction and Fit of Terror, but an effectual, divine Call accomplish'd with an high Hand, and attended with such a surprizing Change in the Apostle, in the Temper of his Mind and Course of his Life; followed with such Discoveries of God to him, that it brought its own Evidence along with it. Accordingly, we find he afterwards refers to it on all Occasions, as a Thing out of Question. *I obtained Mercy. He called me by his Grace.* He often relates the Circumstances of it, as a known History and Fact, of which he had as much Certainty, as of any other Incident of his Life. And in the 26th Acts <sup>xxii.</sup> Chapter he goes over the Story again, in all its 4-17. Circumstances, concluding, *I was not disobedient* Ver. 19. *to the heavenly Vision.* He kept the whole Scene in View, remembers, with no little Resentment, his former, blind, wicked Zeal in persecuting the Church of God, and the kind Surprize of divine Grace towards him, and what Intercourse he had with God thereupon. 'Tis not improbable, that while he was at *Damascus* three Days, without Sight, he had the Gospel made known to him. Now it was that *it pleased God to reveal his Son in him*, as he takes Notice, Gal. i. 16. instruct and furnish him for that glorious Ministry, he afterwards so well fulfill'd. He tells the *Galatians*, that the Gospel he preached, was not after Man; that he neither received it of Man, nor was taught it, but by the Revelation of Jesus Christ, referring,



referring, it may be, to this very Time, when he was a happy Captive at *Damascus*; lying under the Hand of God, and receiving his Illumination. Blessed School! infinitely preferable to that of *Gamaleel*: The Eyes of his Body were clos'd, but those of the Mind opened. And here began the happy Period of his Christian Life, that Course of eminent Services which he prosecuted, with a Zeal and Industry becoming such a chosen Vessel.

The Methods of divine Grace are exceeding different towards different Persons. All good Men have not a Conversion and Call as remarkable as that of the Apostle. Some are brought under the Government of Grace, and engag'd in Religion *gradually* and insensibly; which is the Case of many who have been trained up in the *Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*; have known the *holy Scriptures from a Child*; have been disciplin'd in the Houses of faithful *Abram's*; and have been followed with daily Admonitions and Charges to keep the Way of the Lord. The Religion of such Persons grows up with them: They have been restrain'd from gross Enormities, and preserv'd in some good *Decorum* and Order: Something was done in the Work of Grace at one time, by means of the Instruction of Parents, or the Publick Ministry, and something at another; but when and how the Work was accomplish'd, and Christ formed in them, is hard to say: They themselves frequently can't give an Account of it. But with respect to Sinners of great Scandal and Infamy; who have liv'd long in a Course of wilful, open Disobedience; in the total Neglect and Contempt of Religion, the Change is more evident and obvious; when the Grace of God finds them in such a State, the Call of God manifests itself, and ordinarily

dinarily will be known and observed. And I can't but reckon this Circumstance to have some Advantage in it ; not only as it gives a stronger Spring, and more Vigour to the Christian's Motion afterwards, in the divine Life, and adds Oil to the Flame of his Zeal, as it did to the Apostle ; but as it affords a satisfactory Proof of the Work itself, and frees the Mind from those Suspicions and Jealousies, which are sometimes the Exercise of young Converts, and of such as were wrought upon in a more obscure, leisurely Way.

Bless the Lord, O my Soul ! for his Grace, and for this additional Circumstance of it ; that thou hast not only some good Evidence of thy Call, but hast the History of that glorious, and solemn Affair before thee, for thy frequent Perusal, *God be thanked that I was (though I was) the Servant of Sin ; I have obeyed from the Heart that Form of Doctrine which was delivered me.* God called me by his Grace ; and though it was not by an audible Voice from Heaven, yet it was in so signal a Manner, and with such Circumstances of Conviction, Illumination, &c. as won't allow me to question the Thing. The first Part of my Life for Eighteen (some may say Twenty, Thirty, &c.) Years together was wasted, and lost in Vanity and Folly. I wander'd, with the Prodigal, from my Father's House, casting off his Government, despising his Protection, Care, and Blessing. And Wretch, as I was, would fain have filled my self with *Husks*, the Swine's Food, sensual Pleasures. *I Luke xv. was lost and dead, lost and dead to all the Pur-* 32.  
poses of Life ; the Life either of a Man, or a Christian. I had no serious Thoughts of God, my Soul and Eternity. I can't say, that for the Space of — Years, I ever once in Earnest put up one Petition to God. I eat and drank, lay down and  
rose

rose up, Day after Day, and Night after Night, without any Acknowledgment of my Preserver and Benefactor; indeed God was not in all my Thoughts. I attended publick Worship among other People; but with no more Reverence of God, or Regard of what was about, than if I had been a Statue or a Brute. I slept under Sermons: slept many of them away; and might as well have been always asleep, for any Advantage I had, or propos'd to myself by them. My Attention was always loose and unfixed, and often carried away to other Objects; and my Mind fill'd with the sorriest Impertinences. I never bore any Part in publick Prayer; nor knew what it was to join therein: Sometimes I gaz'd at the Minister, and heard him pray in the same broken, dull manner I heard him preach; but never concurred, by forming in my Heart the Requests and Acknowledgments he offered up to God. And oh! how loose, vain, and in many Instances downright backward, was my Life and Course? In short, I had no Sense or Relish of Religion, or any of the Things of it; but was a meer Mass of Stupidity, Folly and Sin.

And thus I continued till I was — Years of Age; when one Day hearing Mr. — preach from — my Mind was strangely awakened: Methinks I see the Preacher still, and hear his Voice; and I well remember some of his Words, and believe I shall never forget them so long as I live. I went home, fell upon my Knees, pray'd as well as I could, and wept in Abundance— After this I pass'd through much Variety; had many Conflicts in my own Mind; sometimes hoping, sometimes fearing, and almost despairing. I retir'd from Company; pray'd often in my Manner; having but dark and confus'd Notions of Religion, notwithstanding



standing my Education, I found myself very much at a Loss, and was assaulted with many, and dangerous Temptations. At last I applied myself to Mr. — who answered my Scruples; directed and encouraged me in my Duty; lent me some good Books; prayed with me, and made me an Offer of future Assistance: And I had frequent Conversation with him afterwards, which was of no small Use to me. Still many Difficulties I found in my Way, and many Infirmities accompanied all I did: But I have Reason to think this was the Day of God's Grace and Power to my Soul; this the *Time of Life*. The Scales now fell off from my Eyes. I saw clearly the Sin, Danger, and Madness of my former Course. The Things of Religion had that Weight and Authority with me as never before. I was afraid of offending God, even to Scrupulosity, in some Instances; was watchful over my Thoughts, Words and Actions. I durst not let a Day pass without Prayer, nor could I be easy, unless I found my Heart ingaged and affected therein; and had some Intercourse with God; and often I prayed several times a Day. Sermons and good Books had quite another Savour with me than they used to have. The World appeared to me all Vanity and Emptiness. I looked upon the Things of it; the Scenes of Pleasure, Mirth and Business, which were before my great Entertainment, with Shyness, Indifferency, and indeed with Contempt. I remember sometimes when I awaked in the Morning, my Mind was filled with awful Apprehensions of Eternity; and as I was ready to pity the Men of the World, who have their Hearts so much immerfed in it; so it was with a sort of Regret that I was obliged to bear any Part among them: And thus, through



the rich Grace of God, \* I proceeded in my Course of Religion comfortably, tho' not without Impediments, Clouds, Temptations, and renewed Fears: But in the main I found myself strengthened and settled; and like the *Ethiopian Eunuch*, went on my Way rejoicing.

Lord, what shall I render for all thy Benefits! For this Act of Grace, of great Grace, sovereign, distinguishing Grace! I would never forget what thou hast done for my Soul: Help me to take the Cup of Salvation and call on thy Name. I have indeed Reason to reflect on this as a Day of small Things

\* I have before hinted the Cases of Christians, and Methods of God's Grace towards them in their Conversion and Call, are exceeding various; often Afflictions of one kind or other; a near Prospect of Death, in a sharp Distemper; Disappointments in the World, &c. are the Means of awakening careless Sinners, and bringing them to their Senses. Sometimes a Sermon heard, a good Book read, a Text of Scripture set home with Power on the Heart, or an occasional Admonition and Reproof. Any of these, all these God can, and frequently does bless and make effectual by his Grace, for the Conversion of Souls. But whatever be the Means or Manner of God's Call, I reckon Persons who have long liv'd without Religion, are not brought to a Sense of it, *they know not when nor how*; are not enlighten'd in a Sleep or Dream, and of dead made alive; and yet they themselves can give no Account of the Matter. I mention this not only as proper to employ the Devotion of serious Persons, whose Experiences may agree with what I have been saying; and for an Admonition to such as know nothing of it, but to bear Testimony, so far as it may go, to a Doctrine, that I am afraid is growing out of Request among us. I am sensible to talk thus of the Grace of God in Conversion, and to put People upon enquiring into the Time and Circumstances of their effectual Calling, is not the Strain in Fashion. But as I believe these are Points of great Reality, and much Importance to the Christian Church, I desire never to be ashamed of them; and must own I should be glad to see them revived from the Pulpit and Press, especially in the Hearts and Experiences of Christians.

Things with me; to remember my great Weaknesses: That *I spoke as a Child, thought as a Child, and acted as a Child* in Religion. Adored be the Hand that supported and conducted me through all. I have Reason to be much humbled that I was not more obedient to the heavenly Vision: was not more stedfast; *and abounding in the Work of the Lord; that I did not press forward more towards the Mark; following after, that I might apprehend that for which I was apprehended of Christ Jesus*; that after I had escaped the Pollutions of the World *through the Knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*; I have been again so much intangled therein. Hereby my Evidences have been obscured, Jealousies and Fears increased; Comforts and Usefulness in the World obstructed. Notwithstanding I would hope the good Work is begun, and has not wholly fail'd. I remember the Beginning of it, when I felt in my Soul the sharp Arrows of Conviction; and was laid at the Foot of Christ with a broken, bleeding, penitent Heart; *and he said unto me, live*. Surely I am not herein mistaken. *I rejoice, O Lord, in thy Salvation*; strengthen what thou hast wrought for me; manifest and perfect thy own Work.

---

### Of GRACE.

1 Cor. xv. 10. *And his Grace, which was bestowed upon me, was not in vain.*

THE Call of God, which the Apostle was favoured with, had a great deal in it to manifest both the thing itself, and the Author; but the most authentick and satisfactory Evidence was from the Effects and Consequences of it: He

Fifth Specimen.

could say, *The Grace of God bestowed on him was not in vain*; he complied and co-operated with it; pursuing the Duties of his new State. He was not disobedient to the heavenly Vision; did not hide his Talent in a Napkin, but laboured, laboured *abundantly*, and shewed himself a good Steward of the manifold Grace of God. May I have the like Evidence of the like blessed Call; *shew my Faith by my Works*; prove the Call of Grace by a due Improvement of that Grace. Lord! teach me, assist me herein; may not thy Grace be in vain towards me. Could I look back upon the most awful Scenes of Conviction, even a Voice from Heaven, stopping me in a Course of Sin, and engaging me in some Services of Religion; yet if afterwards I apostatized, suffered myself to be intangled in former Pollutions; returned with *the Dog to his Vomit, and the Sow that was washed to her wallowing in the Mire*; grew secure and careless about my Soul and Eternity, and a Libertine in my Walk; I cannot see my supposed Call could speak for me, or afford me Comfort in such a Case; or that any Awakenings I might have experienced, ought to pass with me as a Proof of true Conversion. And on the other Hand, though I never felt those Terrors of the Lord some have, yet if I find myself under the constant Impressions of Religion, and the Awe of God; find that I love him, fear him, am careful to please and obey him in all Things, I have no Reason to question my Religion, because I was not brought up in the same Way with some others.

God doth not tie himself up to one uniform Method in dispensing his Grace, and calling Sinners: And we must not think the Work is not done at all, because not done in the Way we may  
be



be ready to mark out, *as God's Way*; as if he had but *one Way*. "I doubt (says a \* grave Divine) <sup>\*Life of God in the Soul of Man, 61.</sup> it hath occasioned much unnecessary Disquietude to some holy Persons, that they have not found such a regular and orderly Transaction in their Souls, as they have seen described in Books; that they have not passed through all those Steps and Stages of Conversion, which some (who perhaps have felt them in themselves) have too peremptorily prescribed unto others. God hath several Ways of dealing with the Souls of Men, and it sufficeth if the Work be accomplished, whatever the Methods have been." He works all Things according to the Counsel of his own Will; works always with Wisdom, and the Manner that is best: He knows how to deal with every one; what Discipline is most proper for him, and what will most effectually answer the Design and Purpose of his Providence in the Call of this or that Person; and a Regard hereto directs to a different Manner of Working.

There is also no small Difference in the Circumstances divine Grace finds Persons in, even in their natural State, which may make a Difference in God's Procedure with them. Though all are Sinners, all are not alike Sinners, alike tainted and defiled: Some inherit more vicious Inclinations than others, from their immediate Parents: Their bodily Constitutions, derived to them by their Birth, dispose them more strongly to several Sins, than the Constitution of others. Nor is it improbable that the Mind may receive both Advantages and Disadvantages for Religion, from the Temper of Mind predominant in Parents; may I not add, especially of the Mother during the Pregnancy? There may be some happy Souls who



inherit a great deal of *natural Virtue*, as I may call it: (though I'm far from excluding the Grace of God from all Influence therein): And these having the additional Help of a pious Education, and Example for their Childhood, are early seasoned with Religion, and by the Grace of God gradually confirm'd in it.

Notwithstanding there are few, whatever the Advantages of their Constitution and Education may be, but sufficiently shew they need divine Grace to renew and change them. There's that Foolishness generally bound up in the Hearts of Children, and which early breaks forth in many woful Instances, as requires more than the Rod of human Correction to drive it away. Much more, no question, might be done by Parents towards the Sanctification of their Children, were they vigilant and faithful; but as Things go in the World, we have but rare Instances of such as escape the common Taint, and may be called *Righteous Persons that need no Repentance*. And indeed how careful soever Parents may be, and seemingly successful for a time, young Persons, as they grow up, are too often carried away with the Examples of the World, and hurried on by Sense and Appetite to many Follies, so that the first good Impressions wear off.

As to the Manner in which God proceeds with these Persons, or with others, 'tis far from being fixed and invariable: And it becomes us not to limit his Grace herein, or prescribe to his Wisdom. 'Tis the Work of Grace I would enquire after, rather than the Mode of Operation. I am much more concern'd to know whether I am called then how or when: And indeed this is a Matter of such high Importance, that I would not be easy without distinct and clear Evidence of it.

it. 'Tis, I grant, a Mistake to conclude none have Grace, that have not experienced such or such a Process of spiritual Convictions; but 'tis a more dangerous Mistake in Religion, to leave out the special regenerating Work of the holy Spirit; as if a religious Course might commence without his renewing Influence on the Heart, and a Principle of divine Life as the Foundation thereof. Certainly nothing but the Grace of God however, or whenever dispens'd, is sufficient to begin the Christian's Motion towards Heaven. I can't understand, I must own, the Account a learned Man gives of this Matter in a Practical Book; "That there is (says \* he) a certain Period of Time, at which every Man that is truly religious, began to be so; and from which the Beginning of his religious Life may truly be dated, is evident." What this Period is, he afterwards intimates: "In those (says he) who have been educated from their Infancy in the Christian Religion, the Period from whence their religious Life ought to be dated is Confirmation; the Time from their Baptism being only their Preparation, or Time of Instruction." He adds indeed, "that for those who have neglected this great and solemn Opportunity, or have since fallen into any great and wilful Sins, the only remaining Time from whence their religious Life can be reckoned is Repentance, that is, the Time since which they have so perfectly had the Conquest over their Temptations, as not to have been seduced by them any more into any gross or wilful Sin;" but the more ordinary and more stated Period he makes Confirmation, or Baptism. "One Privilege, saith he, represented and conferr'd by Baptism, was the Influence and Assistance of

\* Dr. Clark's  
Essay on Baptism, &c.  
p. 46.

“ God’s Holy Spirit ; adding all Persons that  
 “ were baptiz’d, as their Bodies were washed and  
 “ purify’d with Water, so their Minds were sanc-  
 “ tify’d by the Spirit of God : *But ye are washed ;*  
 1 Cor. vi. “ *but ye are sanctify’d ; but ye are justify’d in the*  
 11. “ *Name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our*  
 “ God. At their Baptism they received the Ho-  
 “ ly Ghost as a Gift constantly annexed to that  
 “ holy Ordinance ; and unless they quench’d  
 “ and grieved it by their Sins, committed after-  
 “ wards, it always continued with them from  
 “ thence forward, assisting and enabling them  
 “ to perform their Duty ; strengthening and  
 “ comforting them under Temptations and Af-  
 “ flictions, and *bearing Witness with their Spirit*  
 “ *that they were the Children of God, Rom. viii.*  
 16. I doubt this will not hold true of all the  
 Christian Profelytes, that received Baptism, even  
 in the first, and extraordinary Age of Grace ;  
 particularly not of *Simon Magus*, who, we are  
 told, believed, and was baptized, and yet con-  
 Acts viii. tinued in *the Gall of Bitterness, and Bond of Iniqui-*  
 13, 23. *ty.* The same Author in his Preface, mentions  
 it “ as a Reason why some Men have attributed  
 “ the whole of Man’s Conversion to such an ex-  
 “ traordinary and *uncertain* Grace of God, as has  
 “ given Men Occasion to sit still in their Sins,  
 “ in Expectation of the Time, when this extraor-  
 “ dinary Grace should be pour’d down upon  
 “ them ; because (says he) they have fixed that  
 “ Assistance of God’s Grace to an *uncertain* Period,  
 “ which God himself has constantly annexed to  
 “ his Ordinances, and which he certainly bestows  
 “ on Men at their Baptism, or at their solemn  
 “ taking upon themselves the Profession of Reli-  
 “ gion, (*viz.*) in *Confirmation.*”

Surely this is not spoken with that Caution and  
 Judgment



Judgment as might have been expected. I know not what Proof can be made, that God has certainly annexed his Grace to the Ordinance of *Baptism*, or *Confirmation*; and that the great and divine Work the Scripture speaks so much of, under the Notion of Repentance, Regeneration, being transform'd by the renewing of our Minds, &c. is at that time *constantly* perform'd. I'm afraid, if Confirmation find Persons destitute of Grace, it often leaves them so; even tho' it was administer'd with all the Solemnity the Doctor wishes for; and I can't but suspect the directing Persons to this, as the *Period* from whence a new divine Life begins, tends to deceive them, tempting them to take up with a Formality, or at best a Sign of divine Grace instead of the Thing it self. In the mean time I chearfully agree with what's here asserted, *that there is a certain Period from whence a religious Life takes its Date*, tho' I can't agree that 'tis the Time of Baptism, Confirmation, nor indeed Admission to the Lord's Table, but more at large the time of *Conversion*, when it pleases God to call by his Grace.

'Tis granted this Work is accomplish'd in a very different Manner; sometimes *instantaneously* and suddenly, and with such remarkable Circumstances, that it becomes a known and certain thing to those concern'd in it, and it may be, in some Measure, to others; as in the Instances of the Apostle *Paul*, the Jaylor, and of *Lydia*. *The Acts xvi. Lord open'd her Heart, that she attended to the things spoken of Paul.* While she was hearing the Spirit of God touch'd her Conscience; the Effect of which was her immediate embracing the Doctrine of the Gospel propos'd to her. But often the Work is brought about in a way more secret and less perceptible: Nor is the Christian so much concerned to



to examine into the Method of divine Grace in his Call and Change, as into the Thing itself. The main Points I would contend for are, That it is a divine Work, the Finger of God, owing to the special Operation of his Spirit, and that this, and this alone, is the Beginning of a divine Life. I reckon this well expreis'd by the Author

•Life of God  
in the Soul  
of Man, 58.

P. 104.

referred to before, “ Religion in the Souls of  
“ Men, says he, is the immediate Work of God,  
“ and all our natural Endeavours can neither  
“ produce it alone, nor merit those supernatural  
“ Aids, by which it must be wrought. The  
“ Holy Ghost must come upon us, and the Pow-  
“ er of the Highest must overshadow us, before  
“ that holy Thing can be begotten, and Christ be  
“ formed in us. ” It follows in the same Book,  
“ That there is a new Birth, and an inward di-  
“ vine Operation of the Holy Spirit of God,  
“ which doth constantly exert itself in the Souls  
“ of the adopted Sons of God, but chiefly in  
“ their Regeneration, is a Truth so sacred and  
“ certain, that none who have any Acquaintance  
“ with the inward Ways of God can so much as  
“ question it. This is most irreligiously restrain-  
“ ed to the extraordinary Effusion of the Holy  
“ Ghost on the Day of *Pentecost*, or to the other  
“ miraculous Gifts of the Spirit, in those Begin-  
“ nings of Christianity; contrary both to the  
“ Promises of the *Old Testament*, and the whole  
“ Current of the *New*. ” And having taken no-  
tice of ineffectual Convictions of some Men, he  
subjoins, “ But when the Spirit of God is pour-  
“ ed out upon them, then there are presented  
“ to their Understandings more lively, strong,  
“ constant and invigorated Impressions, which  
“ do not only gain Belief, but obtrude them-  
“ selves so often, and with that Energy upon  
“ the

“ the Mind of the converted Man, that he is  
 “ divinely overcome, and yet without the least  
 “ Force on his Reason and Will ; he seeing the  
 “ greatest Reason in the World for what is pro-  
 “ pos’d, and chusing with the freest Liberty ;  
 “ so that the renewed Man becomes in all  
 “ things another manner of Person than he was  
 “ formerly.”

In short, ’tis God that works in us that which is well-pleasing in his Sight : He opens every Heart as well as that of *Lydia’s*, that is duly attentive to the great Things of Religion ; he begins a good Work in us ; and ’tis from his working that our Course of Religion begins. This is the Period and Date of the divine Life, from hence the Christian sets out in his Race : And tho’ we are not to sit still, but expect his Grace in the Use of all appointed Means, and faithful Endeavours, according to the Powers and Capacities God has given us ; yet we must wait for his Grace as that which crowns our Endeavours, and makes them effectual : *Work out your Salvation with fear and trembling ; for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his own good pleasure.* There is an Harmony between God’s Grace and our Endeavours ; the one doth not render the other necessary ; but both must concur to make the Christian, and indeed in all the Atchievements and Performances of the Christian Life. Phil. ii. 12, 13.

Inquire, O my Soul ! into this important Matter ; upon what Principles dost thou act in Religion ? Upon what Foundation dost thou stand ? Thou art baptiz’d ; may’st have received Confirmation, as ’tis among the Ministries of Men ; may’st have profess’d thy Faith in Christ, and Obedience to him ; sealed his Covenant at his Table ; all this thou may’st do, and yet the main Thing ;  
 the

the Source and Supply of all vital Religion be wanting (*viz.*) *the Illumination and Unction of the holy Spirit*, the Call of Grace: Blessed be God for any Evidence I have of this; that I have any Reason to hope Grace has been bestow'd upon me, and that his Grace has not been altogether in vain; has not been a dead inactive Principle, but a Spring of divine Motion, of spiritual Affections and Operations. Alas! that it has been no more so; that I have so much neglected the Gift of God in me; hid and buried the noblest Talent; quench'd and grieved the Holy Ghost. Have Mercy on me, O my God, according to thy Loving-kindness; according to thy Multitude of thy tender Mercies blot out my Transgressions, forgive my Defects, heal my Backslidings, strengthen the Things that remain, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.

---

### Of GRACE.

1 COR. XV. 10. *And his Grace bestowed upon me was not in vain, but I labour'd more abundantly.*—

Sixth Specimen.

**D**ID Conversion import no more than a Psephytism to the Christian Faith, as many seem to think; Regeneration and the new Creature include no more, than what is done for us in Baptism; as the learned Dr. intimated to his Auditory, when in a Discourse on that Subject he pointed to the Font and told them, *There they were all regenerated*; was this so I should have no occasion to inquire into the matter: But certainly there's a Conversion from Sin, from the Love of the World; from a carnal sensual Course, as well as from Paganism, Judaism, &c. and the one is as necessary



necessary for many Christians, as the other for downright Infidels: *He is not a Jew who is one*; Rom. ii. *outwardly*; nor is that Circumcision, which is outward in the Flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and Circumcision is that of the Heart, in the Spirit, and not in the Letter, whose Praise is not of Men but of God. Nor is he a Christian that is baptized, has learned his Creed; who has a Form of Knowledge, and of Truth in the Law; but he is a Christian, and he only, who has the Principles and Heart of a Christian. *If any Man* 2 Cor. v. 7. *be in Christ he is a new Creature.* And *if any Man* Rom. viii. *have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his.* Exa- 9.  
 mine therefore, O my Soul! into the Grounds of thy Profession and Hope, and don't flatter thyself with a weak Opinion that thou art a Christian, because thou art called so, and wearest the common Christian Badge. The Apostle had a Clearness in this Matter above what most can pretend to: The Transactions of Grace towards him; the Influence of God's Spirit upon his Mind in the Beginning and Progress of a divine Work, was so distinct, clear and self-evident, that he could speak of it and relate it without Hesitation: He knew God had called him by his Grace; well knew *when* and *how*; but after all the fullest Conviction, the most satisfying Proof of the Truth of his Call, was the happy Effects of it; that the Grace of God was not in vain towards him: It was shewn him at his first Conversion, how *great Things* Acts ix. 16. he was to *suffer* for the Name of *Christ*, what Difficulties he must expect to meet within the Discharge of his Office; what Hatred, Reproach, and Perils of every sort; but none of these Things mov'd him, neither counted he his Life dear, so he might finish his Course with Joy. In short, the Vigour Acts xx. 24. of his Love and Zeal were, in some measure, answerable



answerable to the Riches of divine Grace towards him: Never was Man more distinguish'd by the Grace of God, and, it may be, never did any more honour and improve it? *His Grace bestow'd on me was not in vain.*

Lord may I have the like authentick Evidence of my Call! may I be able this way to make good my Pretensions to thy Grace; 'tis comfortable when Persons can look back upon clear distinct Circumstances of a divine Work, and recite the History of Grace in their Conversion. With how much Levity and Despite soever some may treat such a Subject, it is of account with many wiser Persons, and affords them glorious Entertainment. However, I would not lay the main Stress here, and make this the *only*, or indeed the *chief* Evidence of my Christianity. The Work of God upon the Hearts of Men is mysterious and intricate; 'tis common to mistake it, easy to counterfeit it: Some take Conviction for Conversion, occasional Heats in Religion, short Flights of Devotion, or a Fit of Melancholy, in which something of Religion intermixes, for a Work of Grace; and being persuaded that such a Work was begun in their Souls, and thence drawing Inferences, that *once in Christ, always in Christ*, &c. they argue themselves into a Confidence concerning their good State: tho' they have never *brought forth Fruits meet for Repentance*: And this suppos'd imaginary Work they often refer to afterwards, and rest in, as the Foundation of their Hope and Comfort, whatever Reason they have to question it; tho' all their Goodness was a Morning Cloud, and as the early Dew that soon goeth away. O may I not fall under such Delusions! The Grace of God is not a transient Work, but a permanent Principle; *the Tree is known by its Fruits*: A good Tree cannot bring forth corrupt Fruit,

Fruit, nor will it be barren and altogether without Fruit. I have no sufficient Evidence to conclude I have received the Grace of God, unless I can say *it has not been in vain*. Search, O my Soul! into this matter: Has the Grace of God, thou art pleasing thy self with the thoughts of, perform'd its part in thee, accomplish'd what 'tis design'd and given for, set up a Throne in thy Heart, and shewn it self in a steady Course of solid Religion and Piety? That I may be the better able to make a Judgment of my State, I shall here take a short View of a true Convert; one who has been created in Christ Jesus to good Works; one who *has not received the Grace of God in vain*; but who has liv'd and acted under the Conduct, Impression and Influence thereof; in which I shall give a sort of an History of Grace; the Effects of it in the Life of a Christian, from the beginning to the end of his Course.

1. The first Effort of Grace in the Soul, is ordinarily towards God, and in a way of Devotion; no sooner are the Eyes opened, but they are darted towards Heaven; the Christian's first Solitude is about himself; an Escape out of the Danger he sees himself in; a Deliverance from the Wrath of God and a future Hell: the obtaining the Forgiveness of his Sins, &c. These are the great Things that fill his Mind at this Time, especially if he has pass'd through a State of Bondage and Terror: Accordingly Prayer he finds his most proper Relief. 'Tis remark'd of the Apostle immediately upon his Conversion, *that he pray'd*. Which seems mentioned as an Evidence, and indeed a first Essay of Grace; generally Religion begins here. The new Creature breaths in Prayer, the Subject and Matter of which is various, and manag'd with different Skill, Enlargment and Success, according to

Acts ix.  
11.

to the different States and Circumstances of Persons : I may add, and different Degrees of the divine Unction. For the most part there is a great deal of penitent Confession, Self-abasement and Abhorrence, Indignation, Fear, and vehement Desire, and sometimes *strong Crying and Tears*: And as the Christian sets out in this Manner, he remains a constant Supplicant, waiting before the Throne of Grace through the whole of his Life : Nor does he confine himself to this single Duty, but is busy in other Parts of Worship :

*Acts ii. 42.* Thus it is said of those early Converts, *That they continued in the Apostles Doctrine, and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread and Prayer* : When the Grace of God brings any into the Church, they are thenceforth imployed in the Services thereof.

The most genuine and constant Effect, is the divine Nature communicated ; the Image of God drawn in the Soul ; consisting in the several Graces that adorn the Christian's Heart and Conversation. These make up the divine Life,

*Life of God  
in the Soul  
of Man, p. 15.*

“ The Root of which, says an excellent Person,  
“ is Faith ; the chief Branches are Love to God,  
“ Charity to Men, Purity and Humility. Faith  
“ has the same Place in the divine Life, which  
“ Sense hath in the natural ; being indeed no-  
“ thing else but a kind of Sense, and feeling  
“ Persuasion of spiritual Things : It extends it  
“ self unto all divine Truths ; but in our lapsed  
“ Estate, it hath a peculiar Relation to the De-  
“ claration of God's Mercy and Renoncileable-  
“ ness to Sinners through a Mediator ; and there-  
“ fore receiving its Denomination from that prin-  
“ cipal Object, is ordinarily termed, *Faith in*  
“ *Jesus Christ*. The Love of God is a delight-  
“ ful and affectionate Sense of the divine Perfec-  
“ tions,



" tions, which makes the Soul resign, and sa-  
 " crifice itself wholly unto him ; desiring above  
 " all Things to please him ; and delighting in  
 " nothing so much as in Fellowship and Com-  
 " munion with him ; and being ready to do and  
 " suffer any Thing for his Sake, or at his Plea-  
 " sure : Though this Affection may have its first  
 " Rise from the Favours and Mercies of God to-  
 " wards ourselves, yet doth it, in its Growth and  
 " Progress, transcend such particular Considera-  
 " tions, and ground itself on his infinite Good-  
 " ness, manifested in all the Works of Creation,  
 " and Providence. A Soul thus possessed with di-  
 " vine Love, must needs be enlarged towards all  
 " Mankind, in a sincere and unbounded Affecti-  
 " on ; because of the Relation they have to God,  
 " being his Creatures, and having something of  
 " his Image stamp'd upon them. And this is that  
 " Charity I named as the second Branch of Re-  
 " ligion, and under which all the Parts of Ju-  
 " stice, and all the Duties we owe to our Neigh-  
 " bour are eminently comprehended : For he  
 " who doth truly love all the World, will be  
 " nearly concerned in the Interest of every one,  
 " and so far from wronging, or injuring any  
 " Person, that he will resent any Evil befalls o-  
 " thers, as if it happened to himself.

" By Purity I understand a due Abstractedness  
 " from the Body, and Mastery over the inferior  
 " Appetites ; or such a Temper and Disposition  
 " of Mind, as makes a Man despise and abstain  
 " from all Pleasures and Delights of Sense or  
 " Fancy, which are sinful in themselves, or  
 " tend to extinguish or lessen our Relish of more  
 " divine and intellectual Pleasures ; which doth  
 " also infer a Resoluteness to undergo all those  
 " Hardships he may meet with in the Performance



“ of his Duty ; so that not only Chastity and  
 “ Temperance, but also Christian Courage and  
 “ Magnanimity may come under this Head.  
 “ Humility imports a deep Sense of our Mean-  
 “ ness, with a hearty and affectionate Acknow-  
 “ ledgment of our owing all that we are to the  
 “ divine Bounty ; which is always accompanied  
 “ with a profound Submission to the Will of  
 “ God, and great Deadness toward the Glory of  
 “ the World, and Applause of Men. These are  
 “ the highest Perfections that either Men or An-  
 “ gels are capable of ; the very Foundation of  
 “ Heaven laid in the Soul ; and he who hath at-  
 “ tained them, needs not desire to pry into the  
 “ hidden Rolls of God’s Decrees, or search the  
 “ Volumes of Heaven to know what’s determin-  
 “ ed about his everlasting Condition ; but he  
 “ may find a Copy of God’s Thoughts concern-  
 “ ing him written in his own Breast : His Love  
 “ to God may give him Assurance of God’s Fa-  
 “ vour to him ; and those Beginnings of Happi-  
 “ ness which he feels in the Conformity of the  
 “ Powers of his Soul to the Nature of God, and  
 “ Compliance with his Will, are a sure Pledge  
 “ that his Felicity shall be perfected and con-  
 “ tinued to all Eternity : And it is not without  
 “ Reason that one said, *I had rather see the real*  
 “ *Impressions of a god-like Nature upon my own*  
 “ *Soul, than have a Vision from Heaven, or an An-*  
 “ *gel sent to tell me, that my Name were enroll’d in*  
 “ *the Book of Life.*”

These Graces, which might be more largely ex-  
 plain’d, and to which many other Particulars  
 might be added, are the most infallible Evidence  
 of a divine Work, and indeed the genuine Issues  
 of it. ’Tis as fit to call that a Man, which has  
 no Soul, no rational Faculties, as him a Christian  
 that

that is destitute of the Graces of the Spirit ; not that the Convert *immediately* and on a sudden, finds them all in himself, and all in their Strength, Lustre and Vigour. They are the Product ordinarily of much Time and Experience ; the new Creature, or Creature of Grace is first an Embryo, as I may say, as well as the natural Creature, and all the Members of it in *Continuance* are fashioned, when as yet there were none of them. That glorious Piece, the divine Image, is not brought to Perfection all at once, but receives many additional Touches and gradual Refinement ; the Christian sitting time after time under the Hand of the divine Spirit ; nor is the finishing Stroke given till we leave the Body. I bless thee, O my God ! for what I have experienc'd of this great and glorious Work, and the happy Fruits thereof ; for what thou hast performed in me, and for me ; for the washing of Regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost ; for the more imperfect Draught of thy Image. Lord ! carry on what thou hast begun, fulfill the Work of Faith in me, of Love and of every other Grace with Power.

3dly, The Grace of God is a sovereign Preservative against Sin : arms and strengthens the Soul against it, and gives a Conquest over it ; *whosoever is born of God, says the Apostle, does not commit Sin, for his Seed remaineth in him, and he cannot Sin, because he is born of God.* And again. *We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not, but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.* And to the same purpose, *They that are Christ's have crucified the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts.* 'Tis not said they *shall*, but they *have* crucified them, have done it already, in some measure.

1 John iii.

Chap. v.

18.

Gal. v. 14.

Neh. v. 15.

1 John v.

3.

—iii. 3.

Ec.

The Seed of God, the first original Principle, is planted in the Soul to defend it against the Defilements of Sin; and indeed all the Graces, as Branches from that Root are so many Guards of the Heart; as *Fear, Love, Hope, &c.* Lord, may I find the Power and Efficacy of thy Grace herein; find it a prevailing Principle of Mortification; of Victory over the World, and the Lusts thereof, disposing and enabling me to cleanse myself from all Filthiness both of Flesh and Spirit: Surely if I be born of God and resemble him, as I shall love what he loveth, so I shall hate the abominable thing his Soul hateth.

4thly, Divine Grace manifests itself in a constant vigorous Opposition to the Remainders of Sin. The best of Christians, in this Life, have *Sin dwelling in them*; are compassed about with Infirmities and Frailties, which Grace struggles with and gradually subdues. Every Nature has its Antipathies, and will bend its Force against such things as are destructive and hurtful to it. Thus it is with the new Nature; and as there is nothing more contrary to it, more destructive of its Interests and Comforts than Sin, it cannot but oppose it; and hence there is an inward Warfare and Contest in the Soul of a renewed Man; *The Flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh.* This, I think, the Apostle represents *Rom. vii.* Nor can I apprehend any Injury done to him, or Religion, by such an Interpretation: Those that object and insist that the Apostle is not here speaking of himself, but in the Person of a carnal Jew, under the ineffectual Teaching and Restraint of the Law, and Reproof of his own Conscience, do not, it may be, enough consider, that it is not any Sort of gross Sins the Apostle is complaining of the Prevalency of; nor of a willing allowed Subjection to *any Sin*;



*Sin*; but of such Infirmities, as were against the Purpose, Resolution and Bent of his Mind; and if any Expressions be thought too strong, we may understand them as the Languages of Humility; Instances of which we have elsewhere: As when he calls himself *the chief of Sinners*; *less than the least of all the Saints*. He was far from *serving the Law of Sin*, by a deliberate free Consent thereto; or being *sold under Sin*, as that notes his yielding himself a willing Captive. Sin was dethron'd in his Soul; was no longer *King and Lord* there, tho' it sometimes play'd the *Tyrant*: His Heart, his Will, which is the Man, was against it, and therefore he could say, *It is not I, but Sin that dwelleth in me*. Ver. 17. He aim'd at a more absolute Purity than he could attain to, and so often falling short, he bewailed his Case, and expresses himself with this Resentment; in which I can see nothing inconsistent with what he says in the foregoing Chapter, or in any other Part of the *New Testament*. Christians of great Refinement and better Taste in Religion, will censure themselves with much Severity, for such Infirmities as escape the Observation of others. The Want of a Frame for the Solemnities of God's House, Worship and Day; neglecting or mismanaging a Duty; the Sallies of Pride, Vanity, Envy, &c. will occasion deeper Humblings, greater Self-reproach and Abhorrence, than others find upon the Commission of very gross Sins; and no Wonder that Persons of this Make and Temper complain of a Law in their Members; of Captivity, Slavery, Bondage, and are ready to cry out, *O wretched Men, who shall deliver us!* An irregular Motion in the Mind, disorderly Affections, Desires, Passions, &c. Want of Love to God, Delight in him, Cheerfulness, Life and Vigour in his Service, are with them *great Sins*;



and as they are such Infirmities as these I suppose the Apostle here refers to and not Drunkness, Adultery, Sodomy, Murder, and the like Infamies ; I can't see why he may not speak of himself in the Strain he does ; not thereby representing himself, or any other good Man as living in fleshly Lusts, but as groaning under a Sense of present Imperfections, and waiting for a Deliverance : But after all, I don't think it worth while to contend for this Construction ; the thing it self is certain, whether it be found in this Place of Scripture or not ; there's an inward Struggle, in good Men, of Grace against Corruption ; and I reckon it a Mark of Grace, and an Evidence that it is not in vain towards us, when we have a due Sense and Resentment of remaining Infirmities, and are in the proper Use of Means striving for Mastery.

5tly, Divine Grace in the Soul is a Principle of universal Obedience, and zealous Service in Religion : As the Gospel, that Declaration and Instrument of Grace, teaches *to deny Ungodliness*  
 Tit. ii. 12. *and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World.* Much more does Grace it self, as an inward vital Principle, do so. The Apostle while under the Impression, and it may be preparatory Discipline of Grace, cries out *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ?* Acts ix. 6. His Mind was brought into a State of Subjection, and his whole after Conduct shew'd his Loyalty  
 Phil. i. 21. *to his great Master : For me to live, says he, is Christ.* No Pains, Self-denial, and Diligence he thought too much to promote the Honour of God, and serve the Interest of his Church : We *being affectionately desirous of you, says he to the Thessalonians, were willing to have imparted unto you not the Gospel of God only, but also our own Souls,*

*Souls, because ye were dear unto us. He laboured* <sup>1 Thess. ii. 8</sup> *more abundantly; and with what a noble generous Zeal did he go through his Labours, and bear even the Disappointment of them? I will very* <sup>2 Cor. xii. 15</sup> *gladly spend and be spent for you, tho' the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved. The Grace of God has the like Effect in all the Faithful. Indeed at first the Zeal of young Converts is generally more confin'd to their own Concerns, spiritual Concerns; but as they grow in Grace their Zeal is more extended, and employ'd about those Duties that respect the Rights, Interests, and Services of Mankind, and especially the Church of God. We know that we are pass'd* <sup>John iii. 14</sup> *from Death unto Life, because we love the Brethren. Peter was directed to shew his Love to* <sup>John xxi. 15</sup> *Christ, by his Care of his Church. And the more abundant Labour the Apostle speaks of, as an Argument that the Grace of God bestow'd on him was not in vain, was chiefly in the Service of the Church. Lord, may I have this Evidence of thy Grace! may it be a Source of Catholick Obedience, and Catholick Love! May I have Re-* <sup>Psal. cxix.</sup> *spect unto all thy Commands, and then shall I not be ashamed. Turning unto thee with all my Heart,* <sup>2 Kings xxiii. 25</sup> *with all my Soul, and with all my Might, according to all thy Law. Walking in all thy Ordinances, and in the whole Compass of my Duty blameless. Help me to converse not only with thyself, but with my Fellow-Creatures, according to the Rules of thy Word; loving God with all my Heart, Soul, and Mind, and my Neighbour as myself; doing Good to all Men, as I have Opportunity, especially unto them who are of the Household of Faith; praying for the Peace of Jerusalem, preferring it to my chiefest Joy, and seeking its Good always.*

6ibly, 'Tis among the Effects of the Grace of God, that it so moulds, transforms, and frames the Heart for Religion, that the Work of it becomes *natural, free and easy*. *The Christian*, at first, finds more Difficulty in his Way; more Reluctance and Backwardness to his Duty; but as Grace prevails, this is by Degrees overcome, his Heart is enlarged, and he runs the Ways of God's Commandments with Alacrity and Cheerfulness. " Religion (says one \* *Dighton*) is an " inward, free, self-moving Principle; and thole " who have made Progress in it are not acted " only by external Motives, driven merely by " Threatnings, nor bribed by Promises, nor " constrained by Laws; but are powerfully inclin'd to that which is Good, and delight in the Performance of it. The Love which a " pious Man bears to God and Goodness, is not " so much by Virtue of a Command enjoining " him so to do, as by a new Nature instructing " and prompting him to it. Nor does he pay " his Devotions as an unavoidable Tribute, only " to appease the divine Justice, or quiet his clamorous Conscience; but those religious Exercises are the proper Emanations of the divine " Life, the natural Employments of the new " born Soul: He prays, and gives Thanks, and " repents, not only because these Things are " commanded, but rather because he is sensible " of his Wants, and of the divine Goodness, and " of the Folly and Misery of a sinful Life: His " Charity is not forced, nor his Alms extorted " from him; his Love makes him willing to " give; and though there were no outward Obligation, *his Heart would devise liberal Things*. " Injustice, or Intemperance, and all other " Vices are as contrary to his Temper and Con-  
" stitution,

\*Life of God  
in the Soul  
of Man, 58.



“ stitution, as the basest Actions are to the most  
 “ generous Spirit, and Impudence and Scurrility  
 “ to those who are naturally modest. In a  
 “ Word, what our blessed Saviour said of him-  
 “ self, is in some Measure applicable to his Fol-  
 “ lowers, *that it is their Meat and Drink to do*  
 “ *their Father’s Will.* Those Exercises of Reli- P. 31.  
 “ gion, which to others are insipid and tedious,  
 “ do yield the highest Pleasure, and Delight to  
 “ them: They rejoice when they are called to  
 “ go up to the House of the Lord; that they  
 “ may see his *Power* and his *Glory* as they have Psal. lxxiii.  
 “ formerly seen it in his *Sanctuary.* They never 2.  
 “ think themselves so happy, as when having re-  
 “ tir’d from the World, and having got free  
 “ from the Noise and Hurry of Affairs, and  
 “ silenc’d all their clamorous Passions (those  
 “ troublesome Guests within) they place them-  
 “ selves in the Presence of God, and entertain  
 “ Fellowship and Communion with him. They  
 “ delight to adore his Perfections, and recount  
 “ his Favours, and to protest their Affection to  
 “ him, and tell him a thousand times that they  
 “ love him; to lay out their Troubles and Wants  
 “ before him, and disburthen their Hearts in his  
 “ Bosom.” Religion is not only their Work,  
 but their Element in some Measure; not but  
 they may sometimes have their dark Hours and  
 dull Frames, but ordinarily Religion is agreeable to  
 them; a *Day in God’s Court is better than a thousand:*  
 They have many Hours of Comfort and Joy upon  
 their Knees, and of Triumph at the Lord’s Ta-  
 ble. Lord, may I experience more of the Power  
 of thy Grace in this Instance; I shall then be as-  
 sur’d ’tis not in vain. May I be thus transform’d  
 more and more transform’d, by the renewing of  
 my Mind; may Religion become my Delight,  
my



my very Life and Nature ; my constant Entertainment and Joy.

7thly, The Grace of God, when 'tis not in vain, but has free Scope in the Soul, carries it forward through all the Stages of the divine Life, refining, purifying, and advancing it still higher and higher therein. *The Path of the Just is as the shining Light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect Day.* As the rising Sun increases till it comes to its Meridian Strength and Brightness, so it should be with the Christian, and would be, did he not check and restrain the divine Principle, and quench the divine Spirit. Oh ! may I hold on my Way, wax stronger and stronger ; and like him that *sat on the white Horse, go forth conquering, and to conquer.*

8thly, It is of an humbling Nature , notwithstanding all its great Atchievements, its Victories and Triumphs, it lays the Soul low, and keeps it in a State of Abasement, and often of Self-Annihilation. The Apostle laboured more abundantly than they all, and was every way a Person of distinguished Excellency ; and yet, how doth he shrink and contract himself ? *I am nothing ; less than the least of all Saints ; forgetting the Things which are behind, he pressed towards the Mark.*

2 Cor. xii. 15.  
Eph. iii. 8.  
Phil. iii. 13, 14.

Past Attainments he made little Account of, and was ready to overlook them as nothing.

*Nilq; putans actum dum quid superesset agendum.*

And hence I suppose that humbling Strain, Rom. vii. which so many think cannot be understood of the Apostle himself. It would not, I believe, have been his Language, when a *Pharisee*, and when touching the Righteousness of the Law he was blameless ; but that Grace, which had so gloriously

gloriously distinguished and enriched him, had emptied him also: The best Christians are often least in their own Eyes. *I am carnal*, says he, though he had a most devout Heart; a most divine, heavenly, and spiritual Frame. Lord! whilst I contemplate thy Grace, and praise thee for the Ornaments thou hast put upon me; may I have a constant Sense of my own Imperfections, and be vile, and nothing in my own Eyes.

gthly, I can't but reckon it among the Properties of divine Grace, when duly cherished and improv'd, and not in vain, that it raises the Mind above this World, and fixes the Eye upon another. Grace is of an aspiring Nature, and moves<sup>ult.</sup> with a constant Tendency towards Heaven; and as it has the World in its Way, it triumphs over it: It not only maintains a Warfare against it, in all the Forms in which it appears, tempting, deluding, in grieving and ensnaring, but overcomes it, strips it of its Charms, and throws it under Foot. The Christian under the Power, Influence, and Prevalency of the Grace of God, is in some Measure *crucified to the World*, Gal. vi. 14. *and the World to him*. His Heart is in Heaven; his Affections withdrawn from this Earth, so that he often looks down upon it with a pious Shyness; and passes through its various Scenes of Vanity and Trial with a great deal of Indifferency; *weeping, as though he wept not; and rejoicing, as though he rejoiced not*. This was the Apostle's<sup>30.</sup> happy Temper and Frame; he could ~~not~~ say, *None of these Things move me, neither count I my* Acts xx. 24. *Life dear, so I may finish my Course with Joy*. The Affairs of Religion, and of another World, appear'd so great and important; did so possess his Mind and fill his Faculties, that this World was almost quite out of Sight with him: He would scarce

scarce vouchsafe a Glance towards it ! And I can't but observe with what an Emphasis of Affection he speaks of the Day of Retribution, often calling it, *that Day*. The Day is not describ'd, nor mentioned before ; the Antecedent was in his own Mind ; *that Day*, viz. *that great and glorious Day his Heart and Thoughts run so much upon* : The Day of his Hopes and Happiness ; which he had a constant Reference to, for Support and Comfort in his Tribulations, and Excitement in his Duties and Labours ; and in Comparison of which every other Day, and the Occurrences thereof were but Dreams and Vanity. Alas ! that I know no more of the Power and Efficacy of divine Grace herein ; that my Affections are no more carried out after the Things of a future World, and my Mind no more filled with the Prospect of *that Day*, and the Glories of it ! that I can't attain to a greater Indifferency about every State of present Things, but have given Way to little Transports, Ruffle or Discomposure, upon so slight an Occasion as a Change, any Change, in that Fashion and Scheme of Things that lies on this Side Eternity, and is continually passing away ; that I have been so much diverted and stop'd in my Pursuits and Course by the Caresses of earthly Enjoyments. I desire to bless God, that the Concerns of Heaven and another World have, as I hope, the chief Sway with me : May they have my whole Heart, and be all in all to me !

#### A PRAYER and COMPLAINT.

**L**ORD, thou art the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Grace ; the Author of every good



good and perfect Gift. I have nothing but what I have received from thy Bounty: All my Light, Life and Comfort is from the Fountain of thy Grace. When I look back upon the Methods of that Grace towards me, in calling, renewing, sanctifying, supporting me hitherto; when I remember what a Mass of Darknefs, Stupidity, Folly, and Enmity I was, and how much thou hadst distinguish'd and enrich'd me; I am convinc'd I owe thee more than Words can pay; more than Time, than Eternity can pay. But Oh! how am I here confin'd, and at a Loss? my Sentiments and Affections are low, my Expression and Language lower. Accept, Lord! a willing Mind. When my Harp is strung, and my Tongue touch'd with a Coal from thy Altar; when I have learnt the Notes that suit the great Subject, *then* I shall praise thee. And, O my Soul! look back on thy past Conduct. *The Grace of the Lord Jesus* has been *exceeding abundant*; but thy Love, Gratitude, and Obedience have not equally abounded. I have been far from walking worthy of the Lord to all pleasing, and shewing forth the Praises of him, who has called me out of Darknefs into his marvellous Light. I have not render'd unto the Lord according to the Benefits done unto me, have not attended to my Call, and improv'd his Grace; have been foolish, disobedient, bent to Backsliding; have Mercy upon me, O my God! don't abandon and forsake me. I have sinn'd against thee, wrong'd my own Soul, obstructed thy Grace and my own Comforts; forgive what is past; strengthen what remains; perform the Good Work in me to the Day of Christ Jesus; and when the Topstone of this glorious Building is brought forth, I shall for ever cry, *Grace, Grace to it.*



*Of the Assistance of God's Spirit in the Christian Life.*

PHIL. i. 19. *And the Supply of the Spirit of JESUS CHRIST.*

Seventh  
Specimen.

THERE are few Mistakes in Religion, as I apprehend, more prejudicial to Christianity and the Souls of Men, than that of confining the Office of the Holy Spirit to the first Dispensation of the Gospel, and to his extraordinary Works, at that Time. Christ has promised his Spirit to *abide* with the Church *for ever*. His Presence and Help was not to be restrained to one Age. As long as Christ has a Church, his Spirit will have the Forming and Conduct thereof. Lord, I would not deny what thou hast promised, nor reject what I so much need. What a poor, disabled, lifeless, stupid Thing had I been without thy Spirit, and should I soon become, should'st thou withdraw his Influences, withhold his Communications! I would not for a World be deprived of his Light, Help and Comfort; the continued Supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

John xiv.  
16.

That I may have the proper Advantage of this Exercise, and of the Subject I have chose now to review, I would make a few Remarks upon it: As (1st,) That *the Spirit of God* is promised and given to all the Faithful: to all the genuine Members of the Christian Church.

1 Cor. iii.  
16.

—vi. 19.

—xii. 13.

1 John iii.

24.

*Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. By one Spirit we are all baptized into one Body. By this we know that he abideth in us by the Spirit that he hath given us. Because we are Sons, God hath sent forth*

*forth the Spirit of his Son into our Hearts.* The Church is Christ's Body, animated and influenc'd by his Spirit, communicated from him to every Member. Gal. v. 6.

2dly, The Want of the Spirit is represented in Scripture, as a Mark of Exclusion from the Christian Church; and of a State of Sin and Death. *Through him we have Access by one Spirit, unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more Strangers and Foreigners, but Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God.* Intimating, that such who have not Access by the Spirit, are Strangers, and do not belong to that blessed Community, the Household of God! which is also implied, *Rom. viii. 14. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they (and they only) are the Sons of God:* And it is expressed in so many Words, *If any Man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* Lord, grant me thy Spirit, that great Bond of Union with thyself, and Mark of Relation to thy Church; the Principle of divine here, and Pledge of immortal Life hereafter. Eph. ii. 18, 19. Rom. viii. 9. 2 Cor. v. 5.

3dly, Every Believer receives the Spirit of God at the time of his Conversion or effectual Calling: He may have enjoyed his common Influences and Operations before; but now he comes and takes Possession of the Soul, enthrones himself in the Heart; having prepar'd himself a Temple, henceforth he resides in it, *Ye are not in the Flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of Christ dwelleth in you.* Whilst Sinners are *in the Flesh*, under the Influence and Government of Sense, of carnal Principles, and fleshly Appetites, *they have not the Spirit of God.* But when he has subdued these, by that Grace he is the Author and Worker of, he becomes an Inhabitant in their Souls. Rom. viii. 9.

4thly,

4thly, The divine Spirit does not accomplish all his Work at once, in the Hearts of Men, and after his first Grace and Help, withdraw his Influence, and leave them to themselves; but *he dwells there*, affording continual Assistance to those that resign to him, defending and promoting his own Work. This the Apostle refers to, *I know*, Phil. i. 19. says he, *that this will turn to my Salvation; through your Prayer, and the Supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ*. He was no Stranger to the Spirit's sanctifying Operations; he had experienc'd the Advantage and Comfort of his Grace in many Instances; and yet was waiting for a farther Ministration, and Supply of the same Spirit; which is what he elsewhere calls *the Grace of God with him*. O my Soul! rest not in any original Stock of inherent Grace, how rich and full soever, but daily look up for additional Supplies. The first Grace is a divine Flame, as it were, kindled in the Heart; *the Supply* of the Spirit of Christ is necessary to preserve, feed and strengthen it.

5thly, This Supply respects every Grace, and is afforded for the Improvement thereof. The several divine Virtues or Graces (*the Fruits of the Spirit*) as Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, &c. are not the Effect of an instantaneous, single Operation, but the Product of many repeated Influences concurring with the Providences and Word of God, and all the Means God is pleased to make Use of for the carrying on his Interest in the Soul. God's Spirit is a *Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation, in the Knowledge of Christ*. He supplies with farther Instruction and Light, in the great Things of Religion, and Doctrines of the Bible: *Open thou mine Eyes, that I may behold wondrous Things out of thy Law*. He not only reveals the Object, but enlivens the Faculty.

The



The Bible is the Book of the holy Spirit, which he indited, and which he teacheth: Nor shall we ever understand it to Purpose without his Teaching. He supplies the *Faith* that is of his Operation, administering to it, strengthening and confirming it, and drawing it forth in lively Exercise. And the same may be said of Hope, Love, Meekness, Temperance, and every other Grace.

6thly, The Supply of the Spirit furnishes the Christian for all the Difficulties, Trials, and Duties of his Course and Warfare: It includes a *divine Ability* answerable to every Occasion. *My Grace is sufficient for thee. He strengthens with Might in the inward Man*; gives Power and Ability for doing, or suffering, for every Thing the Christian is called to; *i. e.* he's ready to do this, if we in a due Manner, look to him and depend upon him: His Supply will enable us to conflict with every Enemy, baffle every Temptation, mortify every Lust, to comport with every State of Things; with Prosperity or Adversity; to go through both without Hurt, at least without Ruin; to converse with Men, and with God; and in a Word to perform all the Offices of the Christian and divine Life, in a Manner that shall be acceptable to God, and comfortable to ourselves. Oh! may I have this Supply! May I be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might: I shan't then be afraid of Principalities and Powers, and the Rulers of the Darkness of this World. I shall object against no Services I am called to. The Unction and Supply of the divine Spirit will give me Wisdom, Zeal and Courage for all, and in all. I shall then be ready to every good Work, and prepar'd to say with the Prophet, when one of the Seraphims had touch'd his

A a

Lips

2 Cor. 12. 9

Eph. 3. 16

1 Cor. 10:

13.

Eph. 4. 10:

18.

Rom. 8. 13:

Phil. 4. 12

13.



Lips with a live Coal from the Altar, *Here am I send me*, Isa. vi. 8. I'll only observe

7thly, That this Supply is dispensed and given forth in great Wisdom, at such Times, and in such Measures as best suits the Circumstances of the humble, resigned, depending Christian. We are directed to *come boldly to the Throne of Grace, that we may find Grace to help in Time of Need*, Heb. iv. 16. opportune, seasonable, or well-tim'd Grace, as the Word signifies. The Spirit of God knows not only our Desires, but real Wants ; and knows how to adapt his Supplies thereunto.

O my Soul! be thankful for the Office, the powerful Assistances, and comfortable Supplies of the good Spirit of God: He is the *Schechinah* and Glory of the Christian Church ; the great Distinction of the Christian Dispensation. The Gospel is not only a System of the most excellent, divine Morality, but it promises and secures the Aids of the Holy Spirit, effectually to teach its Doctrines and Laws, to impress Hearts thereby, and mould them according thereto. It is accompanied with the Spirit, which the Head of the Church sends down upon all its Members, powerfully working in them, and with them. Blessed be God for such an Auxiliary ; such an Advocate ; and for all the Help, Success, and Comfort I have had under his Conduct. I would ascribe the Praise of all to him ; of what I am, and of what I have done : *Not I, but the Grace of God that was with me*. And, O my Soul! as thou hast experienc'd the kind Assistance of the good Spirit of God hitherto, in all thy past Difficulties, depend upon it for the future : And be not discouraged whatever Dangers, Temptations and Difficulties may yet lie before thee. Wait on the Lord, and thou shalt renew thy Strength : His Grace is sufficient for thee ; *stronger*

*is he that is in thee, than he that is in the World. As the Jews say of their Pillar of Fire, and of the Cloud, that it levell'd Hills; fill'd up Valleys; the same may be said, more truly, of the divine Spirit. It can bear down all Opposition; the Mountain shall become a Plain before this mighty Builder. Work out therefore thy Salvation with Fear and Trembling, and with a chearful Hope and Confidence; for it is God that worketh in thee, by his Spirit, to will and to do of his own good Pleasure.*

Two Things I would humbly resolve on, and prescribe to myself as stated Maxims and Rules for my After-Conduct, viz. always to keep close to my Guardian, and endeavour to derive from this glorious Supply; never to depend on my own Wisdom, Skill, Ability, but on God and his Spirit. *I can do all Things through Christ strengthening me, but nothing that's truly good; if left to myself. And farther, always to engage the Aid and Supply of the Spirit of Jesus, as a constant Ability for every Work and Duty: To which Purpose I would take Care not to grieve, or quench the Spirit; not to neglect or resist him, but obey, and comply with all his Motions; governing myself according to the Rules of his Word, and hearkening to his Suggestions in my Heart; praying with all Prayer and Supplication; and with that Zeal, Fervour, and constant Importunity, which I find necessary to obtain and secure the divine Ability; Favour me, O Lord, herein! thou hast promised to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him, Luke, xi. 13. I humbly plead thy Promise, and beg the Blessing prostrate at thy Foot: Pour out of thy Spirit upon me from on high, and then the Wilderness shall become a fruitful Field. Grant me, according to the Riches of thy Glory; that I may be strengthened by thy Spirit with Might in the inward Man.*

*Of the extraordinary Assistance of God's Spirit  
in the Christian Life.*

*Eighth  
Specimen.*

**I**T belongs to the stated Office of the divine Spirit, which he performs towards all the Members of the Christian Church, to sanctify their Natures, and assist them in their Duties, in every Work and Service necessary to their Salvation; for these Purposes God has promised his *Spirit to those that ask him*, Accordingly all Christians have the Spirit of God as the Principle of a new Life, All their Graces are his Fruit, and by his Operation. And all their Work done by his Strength, By him we mortify our Corruptions and Lusts, By him we discharge all moral Duties, and render Obedience to the divine Law. It was a good Admonition of our Reformers, who after the Recital of each Commandment of the Decalogue, order'd in the Service Book, a *fursum Corda*, directing the Eyes of the Congregation upwards, for divine Teaching and Help to comply with the Precept: *Lord have Mercy upon us, and encline our Hearts to keep this Law.* 'Tis by him we carry on our Devotions with Life and Comfort, *Ephes. vi. 18.* *Jude 20.* And in a Word, by him that we perform all the Offices of the Christian Profession, *Phil. iv. 13.* Lord, whatever thou deniest me, deny me not thy Spirit, as a Sanctifier, as the Author and Dispenser of Grace, and constant Supply thereof: *Shed abroad thy Love in my Heart, by the Holy Spirit which thou hast given me, Rom. v. 5.* May he dwell in my Heart; may I be his Temple; may I always live, speak and act under his Conduct;



Conduct ; walking not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.

But besides the more stated and absolutely necessary Aids of the divine Spirit, common to all the faithful, without which we could neither be Christians, nor act as Christians ; there are higher Measures of the Spirit, which God vouchsafes to some Persons at some Times ; a larger Supply and more plentiful Unction thereof, as I may call it ; and this either concerneth the Work of Grace *in general*, and the Improvement thereof in a more perfect Sanctification ; or is granted *occasionally*, for particular and special Purposes.

There's a special Effusion of the Spirit, which concerns the Work of Grace *in general*, and the Progress thereof : Some Christians have a more glorious Anointing than others ; the *Work of Faith* is fulfilled in them *with Power*. They are *filled with the Fruits of Righteousness*, Phil. i. 11. *Fullof Goodness, fill'd with Knowledge, able to admonish one another*, Rom. xv. 14. Their *Faith groweth exceedingly, and their Charity aboundeth*. The good Work, which the Spirit has begun in them, he has perform'd, and raised to some considerable Pitch of Eminency ; they have not only Grace, but *Grace and Peace is multiplied* towards them. They are *full of the Holy Ghost and Wisdom*, as was required in the Character of the primitive Deacons. The Effect of which is, that the *Heart is enlarged*, and they *run the Way of God's Commandments*. They proceed therein with Zeal, Chearfulness, and Delight, *walking in the Fear of the Lord, and Comforts of the Holy Ghost*, O my Soul ! pray, wait, and endeavour for this more abundant Supply of the Spirit of Jesus. God has not only promised his Spirit for the absolute Necessities of the Christian ;



and for working in us those Things, without which we cannot be saved, but for further and fuller Measures of Grace and Consolation. These he exhorts us to seek after, and consequently these he is ready to bestow: He commands us to be *filled with the Spirit*, Eph. v. 18. to be strong in the *Grace which is in Christ Jesus*, 2 Tim. ii. 1. to *grow in Grace and in the Knowledge of Jesus Christ*, 2 Pet. iii. 18. And as God's Command makes our Duty, it encourages our Expectation. I am thankful, Lord, for any saving Gifts of thy Spirit, but would press forward for higher Attainments. Sanctify me wholly; may my whole Spirit, and Soul and Body be preserved blameless unto the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. My great Master had the *Spirit without Measure*, John iii. 34. and tho' I can't equal him, I would covet earnestly the best Gifts, and be ambitious to have my stinted, limited Measure more and more enlarg'd. O may all the good Things, all the Graces of thy Spirit be in me and abound, that I may be neither barren nor unfruitful in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ!

And as this more eminent Dispensation, and Help of the Spirit, respects the State of the Christian in general, and his higher Stature in Religion; so it may be consider'd as *occasional*, and afforded at special Times, and with Regard to particular Circumstances. Sometimes God vouchsafes an eminent Effusion of his Spirit, to fit the Christian for difficult Duties and Services, that he may be called to. The Apostles experienc'd a great deal of this in the Course of their Ministry. With how much Courage and Bravery did *Peter* behave himself, when before his Enemies? *Acts* iv. 6, 7. *Annas the High Priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the Kindred of the High Priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem*: These conven'd the Apo-  
stles

stles before them, and begin to challenge them for what they had done ; but *Peter being filled with the Holy Ghost*, ver. 8. with great Resolution and Presence of Mind confronts his Adversaries, and defends his Cause. And with the like Magnanimity, and holy Fortitude does the *Apostle Paul* manage in his Answer at *Rome* : He was in the extremest Danger, as he intimates, when he says, *he was deliver'd out of the Mouth of the Lyon*. He was arraigned before *Nero's Tribunal* ; *Nero* himself, it may be, being present. His Friends all play'd the Coward and deserted him ; *No Man*, says he, *stood with me, but all Men forsook me, notwithstanding the Lord stood with me and strengthened me*, 2 Tim. iv. 16, 17. God strengthened him by his Spirit with Might in the inward Man, and gave him a Greatness of Mind, which set him above the Insults of his Enemies, and made him fearless in the midst of all Danger. The same Grace is sufficient for any of God's Servants, in any of their Difficulties : and 'tis what they may expect from him in such Difficulties as they meet with in the Way of their Duty : He often inspires them with Wisdom, Courage, and Resolution, suitable to the Work they are called to. This some have experienc'd, in such a Manner, as has rais'd them above their own natural Timorousness, and their present Discouragements, and left them under a full Conviction of a divine Hand with them. They have found that of the Apostle made good : *When I am weak then I am strong*. 2 Cor. 12<sup>9</sup>. God's Strength is made perfect in their Weakness ; appearing in greater Glory, receiving Advantage from the Impotency, and Nothingness of the Instrument by which it works. I praise thee, O my God ! for any Knowledge I have of this Matter ; particularly at such a Time, when — thou stoodest with me ; gavest me Counsel and

Courage, and deliver'dst me *out of the Mouth of the Lyon*. I will remember the Years of the Right-Hand of the most High; I will remember the Works of the Lord, surely I will remember thy wondrous Works.

Sometimes this Blessing (the special Effusion of the Spirit of God) is afforded his Servants, to *prepare* them for such Trials as lye before them in Providence: Thus God fortifies their Minds for sharp Conflicts, and furnishes them with Grace, according as their Day is. Thousands can from their own Experience subscribe to the Truth of what I am saying. Can'st thou not, O my Soul! add thy own Testimony amongst the rest? Dost thou not remember the special Enlargements, and abundant Consolations thou hadst in thy Retirement, a little before that severe Trial occasioned by---This made the Burthen sit light, cloath'd thee with Armour, and carry'd thee through the Dispensation, with an Ease and Triumph of Mind!

Sometimes the Favour is granted when under Trials, and involved in the Difficulties of them. I have met with a Case (recorded by him that experienced it) of one who had a Variety of Troubles upon him at once, of an extraordinary Nature, any of which were enough to have crush'd him, and would have done it, as he says, had he been left to the common Measures of Strength and Grace, he had at other Times: During this Day of Conflict, it pleas'd God to manifest himself for his Support and Relief, in a glorious Manner; and he leaves the following Particulars recorded concerning this Dispensation (1.) That it was a Time of the most severe Trial he ever met with. (2.) That his Mind, whilst under it, was brought to a full Resignation to the Will of God, and to such a Calmness and Serenity as he scarce ever enjoy'd before. (3.) That



(3.) That he was firmly persuaded of a good Issue of all, and had the Comfort of the Deliverance in some Measure, even before it came. (4.) That this was the most happy blessed Time of Intercourse with God in his whole past Life. Many Hours were spent upon his Knees; and often his Affections rose so high, that he fell upon his Face, offering up Prayers and Supplications with strong Crying and Tears; Tears of Contrition, and Tears of Joy; and sometimes the Exultancy of the Mind was such, that he could scarce suppress it: How long this lasted, or what was the Issue of the Providences he was exercis'd with, is not said. In the mean Time I take it to be a pertinent Instance of what I have now under Consideration (*viz.*) of the *extraordinary Help of God's Spirit*, and yet such as the better Sort of Christians have many Examples of, in the Course of their Life.

Sometimes the Spirit's extraordinary Assistance is in a Way of *special Conduct and Direction*. It may be the Christian's Thoughts are embarrassed, and divided about his Duty; he has been often, and long debating, and canvassing the Matter depending, in his own Mind; viewing it on every Side; but cannot bring it to an Issue. He remaineth not a little solicitous to discern the Way that he should chuse; desiring rather any Suffering, than the least Sin; and accordingly applies himself to God, by frequent fervent Supplication: At last God by *his Spirit*, as I am now supposing, determines the Mind, and this with so much Sovereignty, Strength, and Clearness, as gives full Satisfaction the Decision is from Heaven: Many Examples might be subjoin'd for the Illustration of this. I knew one who had an Affair of considerable Moment long upon his Thoughts, which occasioned great Perplexities; Many Prayers were put up for divine Conduct. At last he came to



to a Resolution ; but Providence remarkably interpos'd, and hinder'd the present Execution of what was design'd : In the mean while the thing began to appear in a new Light, and the former Judgment concerning it was less approv'd ; a great deal of Thoughtfulness ensued ; hereupon the Person concern'd looked up to God ; went to his Bed ; but his Sleep departed from him ; and his Mind was so strongly carried and bent against what before appear'd most eligible, that he could not but apprehend the Hand of God was in it. Bless the Lord, O my Soul ! for any Vouchsafements of this Kind ; that he has led thee in his Righteousness, and has made his Way streight before thy Face. Keep thy Eye always fixed upon him ; live dependent and resign'd, and he'll still send forth his Light and his Truth : The Secret of the Lord shall be with thee.

Sometimes the Spirit of God concurs with the Christian when imploy'd in Worship, and fills this or that Institution and Ordinance with extraordinary Light and Comfort : He is made joyful in the House of Prayer, and triumphant at the Lord's Table : Thousands have found *there* that Inlargement of Soul, such Sealing and Confirmation of divine Love, as has given them a delightful Specimen and Foretaste of Heaven : Glad would they have been, had it so pleas'd God, to have drunk no more of the Fruit of the Vine, till they drank it new in the Kingdom of Heaven. Sometimes the Christian has had extraordinary Consolations from particular Texts of Scripture, suggested, explain'd and applyed *by the Holy Spirit*. A Person of some Experience tells us, " That being for some Time under uncommon Exercises, when he awoke one Morning, he had that Text presented to his first Thoughts, *Mat. x. 29, 30, 31. Not a Sparrow shall fall on the Ground without your Father, but* " *the*

“ *the very Hairs of your Head are all numbered; fear ye not therefore.* This was so strongly impress’d on the Mind, and held forth the Sovereignty, Tenderness and Care of Providence, so clearly, as to lay all Tumults, and beget a Calmness, that is not easily express’d.” And the same Effect one tells us that Text had upon him, in the like Case, *Psal. xxvii. 10. When my Father and my Mother forsake me, the Lord will take me up.*

Nor are such Instances to be reckoned Peculiarities; the Experience of devout and observing Christians can furnish a large Collection of them; much less should they be objected against and deny’d, † because weak Persons may be impos’d upon by their Imagi-

---

† I know some are ready to call all Pretences of this kind Enthusiasm; but methinks ’tis sufficient for these wiser Men, to conduct themselves in the Methods of their Religion, as they judge best, without too bold a Censure of Persons or Things, they may not understand. I heartily wish them Success in their own Way; but am persuaded the more they depend on God and his Spirit in their Religion, the more Success they are like to have. However, if they apprehend it their Duty to dispute against these Doctrines, they should not dispute against the Sense and Experience of others, who would be as unwilling to yield to Delusions as themselves. Nor can I imagine there is any Thing irrational and absurd in the Assertions above. God, as Author of Nature, is immediately present with all his Creatures, and does immediately concur with second Causes, in all their Operations; and why should we deny the like Concurrence, in a Manner suitable to our Faculties, in the Works of Grace? Especially when the Scripture gives us so much Ground to expect it. I shall here recite a Passage of the Author of a little Piece annex’d to the Life of God in the Soul of Man, called, *An Account of the Spiritual Life*, which comes recommended to the World by one that has taken sufficient Care, in his late History of his own Times, to free himself from all Suspicion of Enthusiasm: “ Because, says he, I have often mention’d the inward Lead-  
“ ings of the Spirit, there is great Need of explaining my  
“ Meaning

Imaginations, and take the Impulses of their own Minds for the Whispers of God's Spirit, and the special Conduſt thereof. This is no Argument againſt

---

“ Meaning in that Particular; and it is briefly this: That all  
 “ ſuch as are renewed have an inward Principle of a divine  
 “ Life in them, which as it inclines them to all thoſe Things  
 “ commanded by God, either by bringing them often to their  
 “ Remembrance, by driving the contrary Objects out of their  
 “ Minds, by diſcovering the Excellency of the one and Baſe-  
 “ neſs of the other; or by any inward Delectation, engaging  
 “ to the one and deterring from the other, (all which, with  
 “ more of the like Nature, are experienced by pure Minds)  
 “ ſo it alſo ſets them in the Methods and Ways that may  
 “ lead to a high Pitch in thoſe Practices; and tho’ the gene-  
 “ ral and conſtant Methods be in Scripture, yet there muſt  
 “ be a great Variety in theſe, conſidering the Variety of Mens  
 “ Tempers, Complexions, Educations, and Circumſtances.  
 “ Now for our Inſtruction in theſe, God gives a divine Light  
 “ to all that aſk it of him; which ſuggeſts Means and Me-  
 “ thods to them for advancing this: And they feeling theſe  
 “ prove uſeful to them, may be well aſſur’d they came from  
 “ God: Such Perſons being alſo engag’d in many Things  
 “ that are of great Concern to them, but yet are left to their  
 “ Freedom, without any outward Intimations, of the Will  
 “ of God to direct them, as in the Choice of a Calling, or  
 “ any other Thing of great Importance: If they carefully di-  
 “ veſt themſelves of Self-love and Prepoſſeſſion, and offer  
 “ themſelves entirely to divine Diſpoſal, and in great Humi-  
 “ lity and Meekneſs of Spirit beg Direction from God, he  
 “ will certainly, after ſome time of Dependance on him, by  
 “ Prayer and Faſting, clear the Doubt, either by ſome out-  
 “ ward Determination of his Providence, or by ſuggeſting  
 “ ſuch Conſiderations as ſhall incline them to that which  
 “ ſhall be moſt acceptable to him, and moſt for their own  
 “ Good.”

Sundry Inſtances I could ſubjoin for confirming what has  
 been hinted, concerning the ſpecial, extraordinary, occasional  
 Influence and Help of the divine Spirit. I ſhall add one from  
 a Perſon of great Solidity and Eminency in Religion, I mean  
 the late Mr. *Howe*. The Paſſage was wrote in the Frontiſ-  
 piece of the Bible he uſed in his Study, and is as follows,  
 “ Decemb. 26, 89. *Quum diu apud me recogitarem, &c.* after  
 “ I had



gainst the thing it self, no more than some Men's Wresting the Scripture to their own Destruction, as the *Apostle* tells us they do, 2 *Pet.* iii. 16. is an Argument against the Scripture, and a Proof that there can be no sober and good Use of it.

I adore thee, O my God! for those Specialities of thy Grace and Favour thou hast distinguished me with. I bless thee for those seasonable Sup-

" I had long and seriously consider'd with my self, that be-  
 " sides a full and undoubted Assent to the Objects of Faith,  
 " a vivifying savoury Taste and Relish of them was also ne-  
 " cessary, that they might with greater Force and Energy  
 " penetrate into the Heart, where being deeply fixed and  
 " rooted they might more powerfully govern my Life, and  
 " that there could be no other sure Ground whereon to con-  
 " clude, and pass a solid Judgment on my good Estate God-  
 " wards; and after I had in my Course of Preaching, largely  
 " insisted on 2 *Cor.* i. 12. *This is our rejoicing, the Testimony of*  
 " *our Conscience, &c.* This very Morning I awoke out of a  
 " most delightful Dream, that a wonderful and copious Stream  
 " of celestial Rays from the Throne of the divine Majesty  
 " seem'd to dart into my Heart. I have often since, with  
 " great Complacency, reflected on that very signal Pledge of  
 " special divine Favour vouchsaf'd to me, on that noted me-  
 " morable Day; and have with repeated fresh Pleasure tasted  
 " the Delights thereof: But what of the same Kind I sensi-  
 " bly felt thro' the admirable Bounty of my God, and the  
 " most pleasant comforting Influence of the Holy Spirit, on  
 " *Job.* 22. 1704. far surpass'd the most expressive Words  
 " my Thoughts can suggest. I then experienc'd an inexpress-  
 " sibly pleasant Melting of Heart, Tears gushing out of my  
 " Eyes for Joy, that God should shed abroad his Love abun-  
 " dantly through the Hearts of Men, and that for this very  
 " purpose that my own should be so signally possess'd of,  
 " and by his blessed Spirit. *Rom.* v. 5." This Passage is tran-  
 " slated by Mr. *John Spaldeman*, and Printed in the Life of  
 " Mr. *John Howe*, p. 230. If these Things don't agree with  
 " some Men's Schemes of Divinity, and are besides their Expe-  
 " rience, that is no Argument against them, nor will be admit-  
 " ted as such by those that know them to be the greatest Rea-  
 " lities.

plies



plies of thy Spirit, as a Spirit of Wisdom and Courage, which I have experienc'd; for the extraordinary Supports thou hast afforded me, under Pressures, Burdens, and eminent Tryals: for the Conduct and Guidance of thy Spirit in such Perplexities as I have often had before me; for all the glorious Advantages of his Ministry, both ordinary and extraordinary. I would triumph in thy Love, and make my humble devout Ascriptions to the God of my Salvation; would set up my *Ebenezer*, my monumental Pillar, saying, *hitherto the Lord has helped me.*

And, O my Soul, be solicitous to secure this great Privilege, this Glory and Distinction of a Christian: Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God; whereby thou art sealed unto the Day of Redemption; let all Bitterness, Wrath, and Anger, and Clamour, and evil Speaking, be put away with all Malice; do nothing to defile the Temple of God, or to give the divine Guest a Distaste; endeavour to preserve that inward Purity, that becomes so glorious a Presence; walk humbly under such a Dispensation; such peculiar Indulgences and Vouchsafements; guard against all Pride, Vanity, and Self-sufficiency; have a Care of being lifted up by the Abundance of the Revelations, lest a Messenger of Satan be sent to buffet thee: Say not thy Mountain standeth strong, thou shalt never be moved: If God hide his Face and change his Course towards thee, thou wilt soon be troubled: Thy Chariot Wheels will be taken off, and in vain dost thou think to go forth as at other Times. O my God! never leave me nor forsake me: Uphold me by thy free Spirit, quicken me in thy good Ways; and always proportion my Strength to my Burdens and Tryals: When I am called to Work I never did, may I have the Strength I never had: Don't suspend

spend and withdraw the Influences of the blessed Paraclete: Any Chastisements, any Rebukes, rather than this: Thy Spirit is my Supply, my Strength, my Light and my Life: O! cast me not away from thy Presence; take not thy Holy Spirit away from me. I would sooner suffer Annihilation, and be depriv'd of Being, than be forsaken of God, and shut out from his comfortable Presence for ever.

*Of the SPIRIT, GRACE, and GOOD  
WORKS, &c.*

Luke xi. 13. *How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*

**M**ANY and great Disputes are rais'd in the *Ninth Specimen.* Church of Christ, about the Subject I have been employing my Thoughts upon; about the Influences of the Holy Spirit; about Grace, the Sufficiency, Universality, Efficacy, Irresistibility thereof, the Freedom and Power of the Will, good Works, &c. But as these debates are often render'd too intricate for vulgar Heads, and carry'd out of the Depth of the Unlearned, I shall leave them to such, whose Leisure, Profession, and Studies may qualify them to judge of them, better than I can pretend to do. In the mean time, there are certain Truths of great Importance, which methinks I can discern in the midst of that Dust, that has been rais'd by the violent Agitations of learned Men upon these Subjects; certain Conclusions, that appear to me firm and solid; and which I purpose to abide by notwithstanding some Difficulties in the Premises. As,

1. That

1. That the Spirit of God is the Author of all Grace; the Principal and Fountain of all real vital Religion: This I take for certain, whatever Difficulties there may be in explaining the Operations of the holy Spirit, and distinguishing them from those of our own Minds: He has a stated Office in the Christian Church, which he continues to execute, and shall execute in the Hearts of all true Belivers to the End of the World, He enlightens, renews, sanctifies, helps to believe and obey; in a Word, all our Motions in the divine Life, all our Tendency, and Advances towards Heaven are from him. *We are changed from Glory to Glory; from one Degree of glorious Resemblance of God to another, by the Spirit of the Lord.*

*John xiv.*

*16.*

*John 16.7.*

*2 Cor. 3.18.*

2. I think it certain that good Men under the Gospel have the Assistance of the Holy Spirit, not only in Things *absolutely necessary* to their final Safety, and for the very Being of a Christian; but for his well being; for more eminent Grace and Sanctification, and for higher Duties and Services, as they may be occasionally imploy'd. The Gospel is attended with a more plentiful Effusion of the Spirit, and therefore is called by way of Distinction, *the Ministration of the Spirit*, 2 Cor. iii. 8. God has promised to give the Spirit to them that ask him. He will give with the Bounty of a Father, as is there imply'd; who not only supplies the Necessities of his Children, but delights in all their *real Advantages*, and true Prosperity. Not that every Christian has a Promise of the highest Measures of the Spirit: He may not be called to those Services, nor pass thro' those Trials that require them. The Rule is *when sufferings abound, consolation aboundeth by Christ*. He that's to fight with Beasts at *Ephesus*; to fall into the Mouth of the Lyon; to be



be cast into the fiery Furnace, needs another sort of Support, Supply and Help, than the common Christian, in the ordinary Affairs of Religion Nor are all Christians fit for the like Measures of Comfort. They neither need them; nor can bear them; and therefore God, who is wise and kind in his Dispensations, will proportion his Grace and Favour to the Occasions and Circumstances of his Servants.

In the mean time, as the Christian is bid to *ask* and he *shall receive*, to *seek* and he *shall find*, &c. not only once ask, but continue to ask, constantly ask, according as his Need and Occasions are; so no question God will answer his Importunities, and bestow his holy Spirit, (*i. e.*) his Gifts, Graces and Help, in Proportion to his Occasions. If he be called to act and suffer for Religion, in any eminent Instances, he shall have suitable Assistance: If he be called to be a Martyr, God will give him the Spirit of Martyrdom, &c. O my Soul! lye at God's Footstool, wait beneath his Throne; and endeavour by humble, importunate Expostulations, to obtain this glorious Blessing. *One Thing, O Lord, have I desir'd of thee, and that I will seek after all the Days of my Life!* (*viz*) the Gifts and Graces of thy Spirit, and more abundant Communications thereof. Let the Men of this World divide the Riches, Treasures, and Honours of it amongst them; grant me these better Riches, *the Gold tried in the Fire*, and 'tis enough. I want; I desire; I ask no more.

3dly, I think it certain, notwithstanding the confessed Mystery there is in the Spirit's Operations, that yet they are, often at least, *sensible Things*, and what may be felt, and certainly known. I may know, and do know as truly that sometimes God is present by his Spirit, strengthening, comforting, and quickening my Soul, and that at other times



he is absent; as I know that sometimes the Sun shines, when I see its Light, and enjoy its Heat; and that anon it's under a Cloud, or that it's Darkness and Night.

I don't therefore think it enough to expect the Assistance and Influence of the Spirit *in general*, † and depend upon him that he will assist me in my Duty and Work; but I wou'd be solicitous to find

---

† I need not inform the intelligent Reader, that a great many Divines of considerable Name and Character, and who press the Duties of the Christian Religion with much Strength and Clearness of Argument, strangely overlook the Help of the Spirit; and notwithstanding the Gospel is so full of it, very much leave it out of their Writings, or at least satisfy themselves with now and then a general Hint, *that this is what every good Man may expect*. Indeed they rather seem to take it for granted, that all have the Help, of the Spirit, than to direct Persons to look for his Help, or how they may obtain it; as if it was a Thing afforded in Course, and in a general imperceptible Way, and attended with no Evidence to the Mind; and that consequently Inquiries about it are needless. How much of this Strain occurs in Sermons and Books of Divinity, is known. A late learned Man appears exceeding solicitous to establish Christians in a Belief, of their own Sufficiency, and that all Things required of them in Religion, are absolutely in their own Power: This he thinks of the utmost Consequence to them. I might give numerous Instances out of his Sermons lately publish'd. Discouraging upon our Saviour's Exhortation, *Matt. v. 48, Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect*: He begins thus in these Words. "It's plain, our Lord exhorts us to arrive at  
 "Perfection, which 'tis therefore necessarily suppos'd is in  
 "the Power of Men to attain; for to advise Persons to do  
 "that which is not in their Power, is manifestly trifling with  
 "them" &c. He adds, the proper and natural Use to be made  
 "of this Observation, that we have it in our Power to be  
 "perfect, as our Father which is in Heaven is perfect, is to  
 "excite and stir us up to the greater Earnestness and Diligence in attaining to this Perfection. If we believe we are  
 "not able to do the Things directed to, in which this Perfection

Dr. Gale's  
 Sermons,  
 Vol. II.  
 p. 327.

find that he does so, and to be assur'd that I have his Presence and Help with me, mortifying my Corruptions, governing and sanctifying my Passions, directing me in my Difficulties, enlarging me in all Acts of Worship and Intercourse with Heaven; rendring me free, expedite and chearful in Religion, and ready to every good Work. For these Purposes God has promised, and giveth his

B b 2

Spirit;

---

“ section consists, 'tis but a Folly to endeavour at it. Hence  
 “ it appears, that there is not a more deadly Poyson to the  
 “ Christian's Life of Religion and Virtue, than this fatal Per-  
 “ suasion, which brings a *Dead Palsey* upon all our Powers,  
 “ and effectually destroys their Life and Action. And hence  
 “ we likewise see, on the other Hand, the great Use and Ne-  
 “ cessity of fixing the contrary Persuasion in the Minds of  
 “ Men. For this, it is plain, is at least one main and neces-  
 “ sary Principle of our religious Life, without which we are  
 “ perfectly dead to all Religion and Virtue; but when we  
 “ know, and are persuaded that it depends upon ourselves,  
 “ our own Choice, and Ways of acting and reasoning, whe-  
 “ ther we shall obtain any particular Advantages or not; to  
 “ know and consider that we may be happy if we will; that  
 “ nothing lies in our Way but our own free Choice; this  
 “ naturally fires our Resolution, &c.” Methinks this Doc-  
 “ trine wou'd have been as safe and as useful, had he taken in  
 “ that of the Apostle, *I can do all Things thro' Christ strengthening*  
 “ *me; by the Grace of God I am what I am; not I, but the Grace*  
 “ *of God which was with me;* and that of our Saviour, *without*  
 “ *me ye can do nothing.* He goeth on, “ † Be not frightened out of P. 333:  
 “ your Diligence in the Discharge of your Duty, by any tragi-  
 “ cal, but groundless Complaints of Man's Inability to obey  
 “ the Will of God: *Use all Diligence to be perfect, as your Fa-*  
 “ *ther which is in Heaven is perfect,* knowing that it is your  
 “ Duty to do this, and intirely in your Power.” Here is not  
 “ the least mention of God's Help; and indeed 'tis but rarely that  
 “ is taken Notice of by Writers of this Stamp. The reason of  
 “ which, I apprehend to be, not that they deny all supernatural  
 “ Assistance in Religion, and all Concurrence of God's Spirit;  
 “ but, they take it for granted every Man has this, and conse-  
 “ quently we are concern'd only to exert our own Powers, with-  
 “ out troubling ourselves about Power from on high.

Euse.

Spirit; and as the Christian expects the Blessing, so he experiences the Enjoyment, and can clearly discern whether he has, or wants it. Lord, favour me herein! in this lies the Peace, Joy, and Triumph of the Christian Life. May I thus walk in the Light of thy Countenance.

4thly, 'Tis certain there is a Consistency and Harmony between the Spirit's Help and our Endeavours :

P. 127.

Elsewhere he speaks more directly to the Purpose, discoursing on that Text, *Matt. iii. 15. It becometh us to fulfil all Righteousness.* His first Observation is, "That whatever is meant by this Righteousness, 'tis most certainly something, which is in our Power, and what we ourselves may do and perform; not that I would have it believed, that we are absolutely independent and self-sufficient: These are undoubtedly Properties which belong only to an uncreated Being. Neither would I be understood to say, that we enjoy the full Use of all our natural Powers and Faculties without Controul; and that we are able to use them as we please, without being under any Restraints, if our Creator should see fit to lay us under them. Neither yet would I be understood to say, that we are able of ourselves, and by those natural Powers God has given us, and which therefore are called *ours*, without any Assistance from superior Beings, to do all that is needful for ourselves, and fully perform the several Parts of our Duty; for we know that *the Spirit helpeth our Infirmities*, Rom. viii. 26. And God has promised, *Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. A new Heart will I give you, &c.* All these Things, however, are out of the present Consideration, and the Righteousness spoken of in the Text, must be something which (whether of ourselves independently, or by the alone Force of those natural Powers we have received from God, or by any supernatural Assistance is nothing to the present Case, but it must be something which) is by some Means or other intirely in our own Power." He adds in the same Page. "I don't deny but the Things included in this Term Righteousness, may be what we need, the enlightening and quickening Influences of the Spirit of God, to enable us to perform; but still you should observe, that the Text, and all other  
" Passages,

P. 129



vours : These are always in Conjunction. The Spirit's Help don't make our Endeavours unnecessary ; nor are our Endeavours sufficient without his Help ; there's a Concurrence of both. We are not therefore to sit still in Stupidity and Sloth, as if we could not move or Act in Religion, without some extraordinary supernatural Excitation. In short, all the Duties of Religion are our proper

B b 3

Work ;

---

“ Passages. which press us to the Performance of our several  
 “ Duties, suppose them to be, by all necessary Assistances  
 “ brought into our Power, and consider them in that View  
 “ only, without any Regard to those Assistances.” I readily  
 grant part of what is here asserted (*viz.*) that our several  
 Duties are brought into our Power by all necessary Assistances,  
 but can't think we should consider them in that View  
 only, without any Regard to those Assistances. I reckon that  
 when we address ourselves to any Duty, we should consider  
 it as a Work to be done by God's Help, and actually depend  
 upon, and look up to him for his Help ; without which Dependence  
 we have no reason to expect the necessary Assistance. The Dr. adds, “ they (divine Assistances) being no  
 “ part of our Duty, nor falling any farther under our Concern,  
 “ than as they discover the great Goodness of God towards us,  
 “ and serve to encourage us in the Performance of his Commands :  
 “ what God designs shall be done for us, by any other superior  
 “ Beings, lies upon them, not upon us, to do ; and no doubt they  
 “ will perform all his Will ; and the Work of the Spirit may be  
 “ safely left to himself, to do, who will perform all his own  
 “ Workings and Operations, at such Times, and in such a Manner  
 “ as the great Goodness and Wisdom of God the Father shall direct.”  
 I apprehend something is wanting here by way of Supplement  
 and Explication, if not Correction. Divine Assistances are,  
 no doubt, God's own Work, but it is our Duty to ask them ;  
 and we have, I think, a farther Concern with them than to  
 consider them only as Discoveries of God's Goodness. We are  
 concern'd to depend upon them, pray for them ; not to forfeit  
 them, and deprive ourselves of them ; concern'd to enquire  
 whether we have them or not, and to endeavour to secure  
 them with us in all our Duties, and in all our Occasions.



Work, and the Assistance of the Spirit of God is so far from being an Excuse for the Neglect of them, that it is the greatest Encouragement to them and in them. *Work out your own Salvation with Fear and Trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good Pleasure.* We are therefore to work, because God worketh in us; that is, he assists us in our Work. He works with us, and we work through him and by him; not merely as his Instruments, but as proper Agents, moving and acting under his Conduct and Influence: Hence that of the *Apostle, I labour'd? yet not I, but the Grace of God that was with me.* Attend, O my Soul! to thy Duty in the whole Compass of it. I am to believe, repent, obey, and work out my Salvation, looking up to Heaven for Grace and Strength. I would endeavour and exert myself, as if all was to be done by my own Power, and at the same Time depend on God, and on his Grace, without which I have no Power.

5thly, I

---

sions. I intirely agree with what is farther said, "That we not only may, but ought to have our Hope in, and Dependence upon his gracious and powerful Assistance, which he will undoubtedly afford so far as is needful for us, and which it becomes us, and is our Duty to ask of God fervently in our Prayer, with a firm Faith and Confidence in him." But I reckon 'tis not sufficient that we ask this in general, and conclude that God will certainly and constantly grant it; and that the Work of the Spirit may be safely left to himself, as he expresses it, if that mean that there needs no Endeavours on our part to engage him to work, or that the general Help promised to good Men is all they may expect. I suppose a constant Concurrence of the divine Spirit necessary to the Performance of our respective Duties; that this good Men are to wait and pray for; that they may know when they have it, and when they have it not; and that upon a present, actual Concurrence and Assistance of the Spirit, their Ability and Sufficiency for every Duty depends.

5thly, I take it for certain, that as the Spirit is given, in different Measures, to different Persons, so this Difference very much depends upon their different Conduct in Religion, and the different Use and Improvement they make of the Spirit's Help. What God may do, by special Vouchsafement and Favour to some Persons, I am not now inquiring; but do suppose that good Men have *more or less* of the Spirit, of his Gifts, Graces, and Assistances, according as they carry towards him. *To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more Abundance; but whosoever hath not (i. e.) does not rightly use and improve what he has, from him shall be taken away even that he hath,* Matt. xiii. 12. The diligent Hand here maketh rich. The more humble, watchful, prayerful and circumspect the Christian is, in his Life and Behaviour, the more he shall abound in the Fruits of the Spirit, in his Gifts and Comforts; but if he grows secure, careless and slothful, indulging to the Works of the Flesh, and by Bitterness, Wrath, Anger, or any other allowed sinful Liberties, grieves the Spirit of God, he may expect, as a Punishment of his Folly, his withdrawing.

6thly, All who enjoy the Gospel, have Reason to expect the *necessary* Assistance of the Spirit. *Our heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him,* Luke xi 13: *to all that ask him.* Nor must it be said that we *can't* ask aright. No doubt we are capable of such asking as is requir'd, and made the Condition of receiving; otherwise here was a Promise and no Promise; a Promise to make us despair rather than encourage us. I don't pretend to solve all Difficulties here; but the Notions God has taught us to entertain of himself, of his Justice, Wisdom, Mercy and Goodness; the Declarations he has made of himself in his Word assures

us, that he will not, does not lay our Salvation upon Things absolutely out of our own Reach: Whatever Weakness, Impotency and Inability we are under by reason of the Fall, a sufficient Remedy is provided through a Mediator. And when God has appointed us so many Duties, all tending to our Advantage, and promised to assist us therein, and to give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him, we must conclude these Duties are possible, and that the necessary Assistance shall not be deny'd; otherwise we make him a hard Master, *reaping where he has not sown, and gathering what he has not sown*. In short, none shall perish for want of necessary Assistance on God's Part: None can justly say, though they sinn'd they could not help it; nor shall be able to say in Hell, that though they are damned they could not help it: Such a Plea would afford a Relief the Place of Torment does not admit of; wou'd cool the Tongues of the Damned, and, in a great Measure, quench the Flames of the burning Lake. All there will be convinced, that God was *real*, not only in his Threatnings, but in his Promises of Grace and Help. And this Conviction will render them utterly defenceless, fill them with silent Horror; and when under the just Sentence of God, leave them for ever *speechless*, Matt. xxii. 12.

7thly, The Christian, by reason of the Assistance of the holy Spirit, is finished and enabled for all his Duty, in the whole Compass and Latitude thereof. *I can do all Things*, says the Apostle, Phil. iv. 13. He adds indeed, *through Christ strengthening me*; but then 'tis imply'd that Christ did strengthen him; and he's ready to afford the same Strength and Sufficiency of Grace to every Christian that depends upon him, and seeks to him: Not but that a good Man may be under present Inability, thro' the



the withdrawing of God's Spirit; he may want Courage, Wildom, Zeal for this or that Duty that lies before him; want Life and Flame to perform his Devotions in a suitable Manner: God will have us constantly to depend on himself, and not trust to a suppos'd *general Help*, or a Provision and Stock of habitual Grace. In the mean time all the Christian's Duty is made not only possible, but easy and successful to him, through the Concurrence and Co-operation of the divine Spirit: And if he wants this Help, 'tis because he forfeits it, or does not seek it: *God will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.*

8thly, I think it certain that good Works, or our Sanctification in Heart and Life, are the End of all the Spirit's Operations and Help. *I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes, and ye shall keep my Judgments, and do them, Ezek. xxxvi. 27.* All the Spirit's gracious Influences refer to this, and center in this, that we might be excited to our Duty, and enabled to discharge it; might be effectually taught to deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts and, live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World; that we might cleanse ourselves from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, *perfecting Holiness in the Fear of the Lord.* Indeed the promoting our Holiness and Obedience, the refining our Natures, and conforming them to the Nature of God, is the great End of all God's Designs, and Acts of Grace and Favour towards the Church; and particularly of the glorious Scheme and Plan of Redemption by the Lord Jesus Christ. *He gave himself for the Church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such Thing; but that it should be Holy, and without Blemish, Eph. v. 25, 26, 27. He gave himself for us, that he might*  
*redeem*



*redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works,* Titus ii. 14. For this he lived, preached, and died a Victim; for this he promised, and sent his Spirit. I can't therefore understand what they mean that speak of good Works in such Terms of Diminution, as some do; as if they were of no Necessity in Religion, and had no Influence upon our present, or future Happiness; when really if they be left out of it, Religion itself is a mere Name. We must be careful indeed not to ascribe to our Holiness, Obedience and good Works, an Influence which does not belong to them; not to set them in Christ's Stead; nor depend on them for that Merit and Virtue, which is proper to his Righteousness and Mediation: In the mean time we must be equally careful not to substitute Christ's Righteousness in the Place of our own, and depend singly on what Christ has *done for us*, without attending to what he requires should be *done by us*. This is an Error of the most pernicious Consequence; the worst Heresy, I reckon, that infects the Christian Church; what tends to make void the Law of God; cancel the unchangeable Obligations we are under to our Creator; slur the Office of the blessed Spirit; subvert the Design of the Gospel, and of all Religion, and ruin the Souls of Men; Certainly Holiness, notwithstanding present Blemishes and Imperfections, is the greatest Excellency we can aspire after and attain to in this World. And we must be so far from making light of it, and neglecting it, under a Pretence of *renouncing our own Righteousness*, that we are to hunger and thirst after it. 'Tis in short, the Image of God restor'd, the Issue of the Father's Love, of the Son's Mediation, the Product of the divine Spirit, the Dignity and Improvement of our Nature. And as it stands in near Connection

Connection with Heaven now, it will, when complete, be a chief Jewel in our Crown, and chief Ingredient in our Happiness for ever. O my God! grant me thy Spirit, as a Spirit of Grace, Sanctification and Holiness; make me rich in good Works; help me to abound in all the Fruits of Righteousness, *that I may be all glorious within, and have a Cloathing of wrought Gold, a Raiment of Needle-work.* Grant me all the Graces of thy Spirit, in greater Strength, Lustre and Brightness, and I shall not envy the Worldling other Ornaments and Riches.

Fourthly, Whatever Darkeness Men of a disputing Humour may involve these Subjects in, the forementioned Particulars appear to me so clearly founded on Scripture, and so agreeable to the Scheme of Christian Divinity, I may add of Christian Experience too, that I won't easily give them up, upon every little Cavil or Objection, that may be rais'd against them. Upon the whole, there are two Conclusions I may be fully establish'd in the Belief of, and which indeed comprehend the Substance of what has been said, (*viz.*)

*That all our Success and Attainments in Religion must be ascrib'd to the Assistance of God's Spirit; and all our Miscarriages to our own sinful Neglects.*

*That every Man's Salvation is of Grace; and every Man's Damnation of himself.*

## The SOLILOQUY and PRAYER.

O My Soul! wait on God for all needful Supply and Help of his Spirit. I have his Promise for this, and may be secure of the Performance, if I don't myself put a Bar in the Way, by despising the Blessing, or neglecting the appointed Means for obtaining it: *He'll give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him*; which includes a Sufficiency of Assistance, Power and Grace for all my Occasions: And this it may be is intimated by the different Expressions the Evangelists makes Use of, when they relate Christ's Discourse about this Matter; *He'll give*, says Luke, *the holy Spirit to them that ask him*, Luke xi. 13. Matthew has it, Chap. vii. 11. *He'll give good Things to them that ask him*. God's Spirit is virtually all good Things; if I have that, I shall want nothing necessary for the Life and Comfort of my Soul, and for the successful Management of my Christian Work. Not that I have Warrant to expect all the Gifts and Graces, and all the Measures thereof some may have; particularly not such as respect this or that Office, I am not called to discharge; or any special Services or Difficulties I am not called to: However, I may confidently expect Grace *sufficient for me*; an anointing answerable to all my Occasions, and conducing to my greater Establishment and Comfort in Religion. And for this, O my God! I would constantly supplicate before thy Throne; asking, seeking, knocking, and by such an Importunity, as shews a high Value for the Blessing, labour to obtain it. Lord! favour me herein; vouchsafe me thy Spirit, and all the good Things comprehended in that Gift, and I shall rejoice and triumph in them, more than in all Riches, than in the peculiar

liar Treasure of Kings and Provinces. And among  
 the rest of the Privileges I enjoy, by thy good Spi-  
 rit, may I have his *special Conduēt* in the great Affairs  
 of my Soul; be led by thy Spirit in the Ways of  
 Righteousness and Peace: 'Tis my Encouragement  
 to consider that Christ's *Sheep bear his Voice and fol-  
 low him*, John x. 27. *And a Stranger they will not  
 follow*, ver. 5. They will not follow a Stranger to  
 Perdition, and so as to desert Christ. The Spirit  
 of Wisdom and Revelation, that dwells in them,  
 will be their Monitor, Guide and Safety. Lord!  
 take me under this powerful Protection; preserve  
 me from all hurtful Errors, from every false Way;  
 leave me not to the Pride, Vanity, and Treachery  
 of my own Heart; to the Subtility and Wiles of  
 Deceivers, whether evil Men, or evil Spirits; to  
 the Injuries, Delusions, and Snares of a wicked  
 World: Be thou my Shield and Guardian: Grant  
 me the *Shechinah* of thy Spirit: May he dwell in  
 me as my Strength and Defence. my Light and  
 my Glory.

---

*Of a Religious Devout Temper.*

**T**HERE are many Ways in which a religious *Tenth Spe-*  
 Temper discovers itself. In general, in a *cimen.*  
 constant sincere Respect to God's Commands, and  
 an Endeavour to stand compleat in all his Will;  
 exercising ourselves always *to have Conscience void of*  
*Offence, both towards God and towards Man.* This  
 is the great Criterion and Mark of true Religion,  
 the general Province of it, as I may say; but then  
 the particular Manifestations of it are various; and,  
 it may be, that a religious Turn of Mind appears  
 in nothing more than in a *constant, serious Ac-*  
*knowledgment*



*knowledge of God in all his Providences, and in a devout Intercourse, and Converse with him therein.* Here lies the Distinction between one sort of Men and another, the sanctified, and the profane; the good and the bad, the devout and carnal; that the one overlook God in every Thing, and the other have their Hearts, Minds and Affections filled with him, almost in every Thing. It would be surprising, was it not common to observe, into what a woful Forgetfulness of God the greatest part of Mankind are fallen. They live without God in the World; God is not in all their Thoughts: Though in him they *live, move, and have their Being; in his Hand is their Life and Breath, and his are all their Ways*; yet they have no Sense of God on their Minds, but pass Days, Weeks and Months without one serious Thought, or Acknowledgment of God: And even when he discovers himself in special, signal Providences; threatening, smiting, delivering and saving, their Insensibility remains; they are still the same stupid, unthinking Creatures.

I have been sometimes affected with some Passages in the Life of a grave and serious Man: Giving an Account of his former sinful Course, he often remarks, among other Vilenesses, how intirely he neglected God in all his Providences. "All this while, says † he, I never sought to God; no, not so much as in a formal Manner, either for the obtaining any good Thing, or the Removal of any Evil," though he was in a foreign Country, and expos'd to all manner of Temptations and Dangers. When he came off the Seas, upon his Return Home, he takes Notice, he never returned God Thanks for his Protection, nor once consider'd that God conducted and preserved him. And afterwards, being upon another Voyage,

coming

† Mr. Tressie's Life, p. 7.

coming from *Portugal* to *England*, after a very wicked Course of Living for some Years, he saith of himself, " I had then no Thought of God, my  
 " Soul of Heaven or Hell; but without the least  
 " Supplication to God for the Pardon of the Sins  
 " of my wicked Life there, or for a safe Con-  
 " veyance to my own Country, I went to Sea,  
 " where we met with great Winds and stormy  
 " Weather; yet, though my Danger was great, I  
 " never offer'd to God a Request, either to pro-  
 " tect me, or put a Period to the raging Tempest.  
 " When we were safely landed, I was nothing af-  
 " fected with the Mercy, but presently fell to the  
 " repeating of my former Sensualities. I arriv'd  
 " on *Saturday*; the next Sabbath was the first, which  
 " for almost three Years I had an Opportunity  
 " of attending the Publick Worship of God up-  
 " on. On this Day I was exceedingly profane,  
 " as heretofore I had been: Indeed I went to the  
 " Church, heard a Sermon, presented my Body,  
 " but neither by a Thought in my Mind, nor  
 " by a Billet in the Congregation, did I make <sup>P. 23, 24.</sup>  
 " any Acknowledgment to God of his Granting <sup>25.</sup>  
 " me a safe Arrival." I mention not this as any  
 Thing extraordinary, only as an Example of what  
 is acted over and over again, by Thousands and  
 Millions continually. 'Tis the common Case of  
 carnal, irreligious Minds. Men eat and drink, go  
 to Bed and rise; pass through dangerous Diseases,  
 Perils by Land, and Perils by Sea; are in Deaths  
 often, and yet never own God in any Thing. If  
 they have learnt a few Forms of good Expression,  
*as God be thanked*, &c. there's nothing of Religion  
 and true Devotion in them, but they are Matter  
 of mere Form. Whereas, on the contrary, no soon-  
 er does Religion take Place in the Soul, and Men  
 are brought under the Influence and Power of it,  
 by

by an effectual Touch from the divine Spirit, but their Eyes are open towards God: And as Religion prevails in the Soul, a sense of God prevails also. They eye his Authority, own his Providence, and endeavour to converse with him therein: And according as this Temper is more or less predominant, they are more or less religious.

I bless thee, O my God! for any Experience I have of thy Grace and Salvation in this Respect. That thou hast deliver'd me out of that State of Darkness, Insensibility and Death, in which so many lie, wholly alienated and estranged from the Life of God: That thou hast opened my Eyes that I see thee, and disposed my Heart to own and worship thee in all thy Dispensations. Help me to attend to this more and more: May I be under more powerful Impressions of thy Hand; have a deeper Sense of thy Perfections and Excellencies, and more clearly discern the Traces of these in all thy Ways and Works. Thy Providence is universal, extending to all Persons, Things and Events, *Thou hast prepared thy Throne in the Heavens, and thy Kingdom ruleth over all, Psal. ciii. 19. Not a Sparrow falls on the Ground without our heavenly Father, and the Hairs of our Head are all numbered, Matt. x. 29, 30.* Lord, teach me to believe, reverence, and resign to thy Providence in every Event, and devoutly converse with thee therein: I would humbly resolve to do so; help me by thy Grace particularly!

*Acts xvii. 25.* I would own and adore thy Hand in common Providence, in daily Life and Safety; in daily Supplies of Food; would ask Day by Day my daily Bread, Matt. vi. 11. depending upon thee for thy Blessing therewith; *for Men live not by Bread alone; but by every Word that proceedeth out of*



of thy Mouth, I would acknowledge thy Hand *Deut. 8. 3.*  
 in my Protection every Night, in the Refreshment and Comfort of Sleep; and when I commit myself to my Bed, commit myself to thy Care. *I will lay me down in Peace, and sleep; for thou only makest me to dwell in Safety, when I awake, may I be still with thee.* *Psal. 4. 8.*  
*Psal. 139. 18.*

I would own thy Providence in my outward Prosperity, and bleſs thee that thou cauſeſt thy Candle to ſhine on my Tabernacle: Bleſs thee for Succeſs in my Affairs; for the Countenance of my Friends, and that *thou makeſt my Enemies to be at Peace with me.* I would always firſt ſeek thy Kingdom and Righteouſneſs, and be thankful that theſe things are, in any Meaſure, added to me.

I deſire to own thy Providence in my Adverſity; knowing that *Affliction cometh not forth of the Duſt, neither doth Trouble ſpring out of the Ground,* *Job. 5. 6.* They are no caſual Productions, no accidental Things, but the Appointment and Diſpoſal of a wiſe Providence: Help me to reſign to thy Sovereignty therein; to receive them with Calmneſs and Complacency; to lie at thy Foot, look upwards, do Obedience and Worſhip. 'Tis, if need be, that I am in Heavineſs, through manifold Temptations. Thou haſt the Management of every Rod; the Matter, Manner, Meaſure, Continuance, and all the Circumſtances of my Trials are from thyſelf. I would not therefore rudely object againſt thy Proceedings, charge God fooliſhly, but be *dumb, and not open my Mouth, becauſe thou haſt done it.* I approve, O Lord, thy Diſcipline, and rejoice I am in the Hands of my heavenly Father, and in the Assurance thou haſt given me, *that all Things ſhall work together for my Good,* *Rom 8. 28.* Nor would I be ſo ſollicitous to have the Rod removed as ſanctified. Lord, take thy own Method with me; and if this Rebel of a falſe Heart



murmur and clamour, impute it not to me. I deliberately consent to thy Government: *Not as I will, but as thou wilt. Hic ure, hic seca, modo in æternum parcas.* Guide me by thy Counsel, and afterwards receive me to thy Glory.

I would own thy Providence in any severe Strokes of it; if thou givest *a Thorn in the Flesh*, sendest a Messenger of Satan to buffet me; triest me in any of my dearest Enjoyments, I would submit to thy Hand, and say, *Good is the Word of the Lord.* If this be necessary to keep me from being lifted up above Measure, to humble my Heart, and rectify my Frame, I desire to kiss the Rod, and adore the Wisdom and Grace of thy Conduct. *Blessed is the Man whom thou chastenest, and teachest out of thy Law,* I envy not the Ease and Prosperity of any in the Way of Sin and Death; *the triumphing of the Wicked is short, and the Joy of the Hypocrite but for a Moment.*

I would own thy Providence in publick Affairs, those of the Nations of the World, in all their Changes and Revolutions, as knowing they are conducted by a wise and steady Hand, and shall answer the Purposes of the great Lord of all, and constitute part of his glorious Scheme in the Government of the World. Let not the Wicked lift up their Horn on High, and speak with a stiff Neck; *for Promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South; but God is Judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another, The most High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.* Whatever Projects Men may form for themselves, the Almighty Sovereign of the World is still carrying on his own Wise and great Designs: He is God, and there is none else, *declaring the End from the Beginning, and from the ancient Times, the Things that are not yet done, saying,*  
my

*my Counsel shall stand, and I will do all my Pleasure,*  
 May I not therefore be afraid, *though the Earth be* *Isa. xlv.*  
*removed, and the Mountains cast into the midst of the* *9. 10.*  
*Sea!* I will wait, O Lord, for thy Salvation. I  
 would own thy Providence in the Affairs of thy  
 Church; in its Oppressions, Persecutions, Apo-  
 stasies, Deliverances and Enlargements; in the  
 Rage of Enemies; in the Animosities, Feuds and  
 Weaknesses of Friends; in the Affairs of my  
 Family and Relations; in the Comfort thou givest  
 me in some; in the Disappointment I meet with  
 in others. I would view all these Things with  
 a calm, composed Mind, endeavouring to attend  
 my own Part, that is, my Duty, and leave the  
 rest to God. *The Lord is Righteous in all his Ways;*  
*and Holy in all his Works.*

I would own thy Providence in my religious  
 Affairs; would daily observe my Heart, Temper,  
 and Frame, Miscarriages and Infirmities, Discou-  
 ragements, Darkness and Fears; mark thy With-  
 drawings; bless thee for thy Presence, Conduct,  
 and Help; and daily make my Peace with thee  
 through the Mediator.

O my Soul! Here employ thy Devotion: Thus  
 walk with God, and maintain a serious Intercourse  
 with him in all his Providences; in stated, common  
 Providences, in special, occasional Providences; ex-  
 exercising such Graces as answer the several Dispen-  
 sations of God towards thee. Lord, work up my  
 Mind to this Temper and Frame; teach me an ha-  
 bitual Dependence upon thee; a chearful Submis-  
 sion to thee; a holy Complacency in all thy Ways:  
*Let thy Will be done on Earth, as in Heaven.* I re-  
 sign, O Lord, to thy future Conduct, and would  
 be ready to receive either Good or Evil at thy  
 Hand! Order the whole State of my Affairs for  
 the best; and I would ever esteem that best, which  
 is best for the Soul, best for everlasting.

*Of the special Conduct of Providence.*

Prov. iii. 5, 6. *Trust in the Lord with all thy Heart, and lean not to thy own Understanding; in all thy Ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy Paths:*

*Eleventh  
Specimen.*

*Psal. 37-23*

† Contem-  
plations  
Moral and  
Divine  
Vol. I p.  
30,

'T IS the undoubted Privilege of Good Men that they are under the divine Conduct, not only in the Affairs of their Souls, and that respect Religion directly, but in the Affairs of this World; especially such as are most important, and have the greatest Influence upon their religious Interests. *A good Man's Steps are ordered by the Lord*, Nor do they enjoy only a common and general Conduct; such as preserves them from certain Ruin and Destruction; but they may expect, if they wait on God for it, particular and special Conduct; an immediate Interposition of the Hand of God in their Affairs, pointing out to them the Way of Duty and Safety. This has been owned by many eminent Persons, of great Sobriety in Religion, who have appear'd as free, as any, of the least Tincture of Enthusiasm. " Those that truly fear God (says the renowned Sir † *Matthew Hale*) have a *secret Guidance* from a higher Wisdom that what is barely humane; namely by the Spirit of Truth and Wisdom, that doth really and truly, but *secretly* prevent and direct them. And let no Man think this is a piece of *Fanaticism*. Any Man that truly and sincerely fears Almighty God; that relies upon him, calls upon him for his Guidance and Direction; hath it as really as the Son hath the Counsel and Direction of his Father: And though the Voice be not audible, " and

“ and the Direction always perceptible to Sense,  
 “ yet it is equally as real as if a Man heard the  
 “ Voice, saying, *This is the Way, walk in it.* And  
 “ this secret Direction of Almighty God is prin-  
 “ cipally seen in Matters relating to the Good of  
 “ the Soul; but it may also be found in the great  
 “ and momentous Concerns of this Life; which  
 “ a good Man that fears God, and begs his Di-  
 “ rection, shall very often, if not at all times find.”

That devout and holy Man, *Bishop Leighton*, in several of his Letters, that I have had an Opportunity of perusing, by the Favour of a Friend, often speaks of the special Direction and Conduct of God, as what good Men may expect in their particular Affairs. Thus, writing to a Friend, that it seems had a Matter of Difficulty before him;  
 “ I know, says he, you will endeavour to set your  
 “ self on as strong a Guard, as you can, against  
 “ the Assaults you may meet with from divers  
 “ well-meaning Persons, but of weak Understand-  
 “ ings, and strong Passions; and will maintain the  
 “ Freedom of your own Mind both firmly and  
 “ meekly. Our Business is the Study of Sincerity and pure Intention; and then certainly our  
 “ blessed Lord will not suffer us to lose our Way  
 “ for want of Light: We have his Promise, that  
 “ if in all our Ways we acknowledge him, he  
 “ will direct our Paths.

I grant, there is no little Difficulty in discerning the divine conducting Hand; no little Danger, in some Tempers especially, of being impos'd upon, and mistaking a strong Fancy of their own for the Voice of God: Yet undoubtedly, tho' some may be deceived, all are not. God knows how to do his own Work, and preserve his Servants from Delusion. Sometimes I reckon the Conduct is *less sensible*. God leads us to our Duty through



common Means; as the Advice of Friends; the Deliberation of our own Minds; whereby we become determined this way or that, without perceiving any special Interposal of Providence; and yet in this Case we may have the Benefit of his Guidance. God may direct our Friends to such Advice as they give; and if several advise, direct us which Advice to prefer and follow; may gently lead our own Thoughts to this or that Issue, &c. Sometimes the Conduct is afforded with more Clearness and Strength of divine Light. I knew one who had an Affair before him, of much Consequence in his future Life; after long Consideration, and no small Sollicitude, a sudden Thought struck into the Mind, which determin'd him at once, in such a Manner, that he could not but think it was from God: And the same Judgment he continued to make of it afterwards. Sometimes the Person in Suspence is directed to a Text of Scripture, that contains a sort of a Resolution of a the Difficulty, which is set home with Authority and special Application to the present Purpose. Such as know nothing of these Things may laugh at them; but good Men will not be laughed out of their Comforts and Dependence on God: Frequently this special Conduct and Determination from Heaven is given *gradually*; some Hints at one time, some at another; and as at different times, so by Different Means: Whilst the Christian is waiting upon God, and looking up to him, and is still wavering; inclining first to one Thing, Then to another; at last God interposes by a special Providence for his Help: And it may be by the Ministry of superior, invisible Beings; his own good Spirit, or Angels; either, or both, suggests something that preponderates, and determines him. But whatever Darknes or Difficulty there may be in the Circumstances, the Thing it-  
self

self I reckon certain, and what many Christians have experienc'd, I mean a special Light and Conduct from Heaven in their Affairs.

I don't suppose that all good Men enjoy this Privilege; much less at all times, and in all their Concerns: All indeed have the necessary *Leading of God's Spirit*, in the Affairs of their Salvation, And this is what we should be most solicitous *Rom. 8. 14* about: But the peculiar special Conduct I am now speaking of, is ordinarily vouchsafed to *more eminent Christians*; to such as are most observant of Providence, resign'd to it, and dependent upon it; to such as are most devout and prayerful: 'Tis usually granted upon much serious Supplication, and upon special Occasions; in this or that more important Turn or Difficulty of Life, wherein the Christian's Duty, Usefulness and Comfort is very much concern'd; I may add, in which also the Credit and Interest of Religion may be concerned. In such Cases, I doubt not, Persons of a more religious, devout Temper may have, and often have a special Conduct from above.

I adore thee, O my God! for any Instances I have experienc'd of thy Kindness and Favour in this Respect. O my Soul! still wait on God; live in a constant, humble Dependence upon him. *Trust in the Lord with all thy Heart, and lean not to thy own Understanding.* Thou can'st not see into Futurity; knowest not what *will* be on the Morrow, nor art fit to chuse what *should* be. Leave all therefore in the Hands of infinite Wisdom; consult the divine Oracle, and beg his *Urim and Thummim* may be with thee: *In all thy Ways acknowledge God, and he will direct thy Paths.* Lord, I plead thy Promise: Send forth thy Light and Truth, let them lead me. *Lead me, O Lord, in thy Righteousness, because of my Enemies and Observers: Make thy Way streight before my Face.* C c 4      *Of*

Of Contentment in our present State, and  
Complacency in Providence.

Phil. iv.. 11. *I have learnt in whatsoever State I  
am, therewith to be content.*

*Twelfth  
Specimen.*

**G**LORIOUS was the Attainment of this great *A-  
postle*: He was not only submissive to the  
Will and Apointment of God in every Condi-  
tion of Life, and State of Things through which  
he passed, but seems to have had a Complacency  
therein: All his Concern was about his Duty, and  
how to comport with the Providence of God in  
its several *Phænomena* and Appearances; leaving  
God, without any Sollicitude on his own Part, to  
dispose of his outward Affairs as he should please.

'Tis among the Infirmities of Mankind, that  
they are generally desirous of Change, and some-  
thing new: They would be in some other, and as  
they think better State; would have something out  
of their State that they do not like, and have some-  
thing in it they more like. Add this unhappy, un-  
dutiful Turn of Mind gives them no small Unea-  
siness. Our *Apostle*, 'tis evident, conducted him-  
self with higher Wisdom; he had learnt, *in what-  
soever State he was, to be content*: Not that every  
State was perfectly the same to him; he could not  
but find a sensible Difference between good Treat-  
ment and bad in the World; between the faithful  
Friendship of his beloved *Titus*, and the Trea-  
chery and Cowardice of *Demas* and others; be-  
tween the Goodness and Kindness of *Gaius* and O-  
*nesimus*, and the Malice of *Alexander* the Copper-  
smith, between the warm Affection and Zeal of some  
he

2 Cor. 2. 13.

2 Cor. 7. 6

2 Tim. 4.

10, 16, 17,

John 3. 1.

2 Tim. 1. 16,

17, 18.

2 Tim. 4. 14.



he laboured amongst, and their After-Coolness towards himself, and Apostacy from the Gospel, between Persecutions, Bonds and Imprisonment, and Liberty and Freedom; between the Visions of the third Heavens and the Thorn in the Flesh. It was impossible that these Things should appear alike grateful to him, and be entertain'd with the like relish; and yet he had learnt *in every State to be content*: He had an All-sufficiency in God, and a sort of *Self-Sufficiency* in his own Mind, from divine Principles implanted there; which led him to converse with God, derive from him, and live upon him in all; consequently not only to bear every State without Murmuring and Reluctancy, but *to rest* in it with a sort of Pleasure, chusing it as what God had chose and appointed.

Gal. 4. 14.  
15. 16.  
2 Cor 12. 15

|| Αυταρκείας  
ἦν αὐτῷ.

O my Soul! aim at, and endeavour for this blessed Evenness of Mind; a dutiful, calm, divine Composure; an holy Contentment in every State: Then nothing can come amiss to thee; every State will be safe, and in the main comfortable. Thou must *learn it*; learn it of God, and therefore frequently apply to him by fervent, importunate Prayer for his Teaching; and beg he would discipline, and form thy Heart thereunto. And as a Means on thy Part, often set before thee such Considerations, as may be useful to promote such a Temper, a full Contentment in every State of Things. Consider,

1<sup>st</sup>, That God governs the World, and has the ordering of all Affairs; such as concern thyself in particular, as well as others: Nothing tends more to quiet the Mind, under all the Trials and Grievances of Life, than a firm Belief of divine Providence: and as this is so fully set forth in the Bible, that glorious System, and Rule of his Religion,



gion, the Christian has unspeakably the Advantage of others. The Heathens were miserably in the dark in this Respect: Some of the Philosophers denied all Providence; as the *Epicureans*: And indeed 'tis no Wonder, that they who thought the World was made by Chance, should think it might be govern'd so. *Aristotle* is accused, as confining it to the Heavens above, and denying that it interpos'd in human Affairs: And even that Sect (the *Stoicks*) that were the most zealous Assertors of Providence, so restrained and limited it, as to leave it of little Use and Comfort to Mankind. Some taught indeed that there was a general Providence, which watch'd over, and governed the several Species, and Sorts of Beings, but that it did not extend to Individuals or Particulars; Others, that went farther, exempted the lesser Concerns of Men from the Cognizance of Providence. Hence that known Saying, mentioned in *Cicero Magna curant Dii, parva negligunt*: And, says the Poet, *non vacat exiguis*, &c. They thought the Gods might super-intend Matters of the highest Importance, as the setting a Ruler over a Nation, we'll suppose; but that they did not interest themselves in the low Affairs of private Families, and particular Persons. And it seems the best of them ascrib'd to virtuous and good Men a Sort of Self-sufficiency independent on God and Providence. *Quid Votis opus est*, says *Seneca*, *turpe est Deos fatigare, fac te felicem*? What Occasion for importuning the Gods, and wearying them with your Prayers and Din? Take Care of your own Happiness yourself. These were the Principles of the People, that *sat in Darkness, and in the Region of the Shadow of Death*: How uncomfortable they are, compar'd with that Scheme of Providence laid down in the Bible, every one may discern. I grant, Contentment was a Subject very  
much

much labour'd by some of them, particularly the *Stoicks*: But it is evident they wanted the true Foundation of it (*viz.*) the Knowledge of a divine Providence, superintending and governing all Things. This the Bible supplies with much Advantage; which represents Providence as running through the World with a constant Sovereignty and Care. 'Tis universal, *Wise, Righteous and Holy, Merciful and good, Powerful*, 'Tis exercis'd towards good Men with special Tenderness and Love, Contemplate, O my Soul! this amiable Subject; endeavour to be well establish'd in the Belief of Providence; survey it in all its Properties, and thou wilt find it the most proper Argument for Contentment, and a constant Source of Consolation. God has Right to Govern the World, all Persons and Things: *His is the Kingdom*: He best knows how to govern it; and whatever Censures shortsighted, foolish Creatures may pass upon his Government, there is no Flaw in it: *As for God, his Way is perfect.*

Psal. 103.

19.

Dan. 4. 35.

Isaiah 28.

29.

Psal. 145.

17.

Psal. 145.

8, 9.

Dan. 4. 35.

Isaiah 43.

13.

2Cbro. 16.

9.

Psal. 25. 10.

Matt. 10.

2dly, Consider, whatever State thou art in, 'tis by the divine Providence: God has the ordering of it. *Not a Sparrow falls on the Ground without Him; the Hairs of thy Head are number'd.* If *Schimei* curse *David*, 'tis because the Lord commanded him. All the Ingredients in thy Cup of every Sort, and all the Variety of thy State are from him. By his Favour thy Mountain stands strong, he hides his Face, and thou art troubled: He turns thy Mourning into Dancing, putteth off thy Sackcloth, and girdeth thee with Gladness. However, second Causes may concur, and whatever Guilt there may be

30.

Psal. 18. 30

30.

Matt. 29.

30.

2 Sam. 16.

10.

Psal. 30. 7.

11.

in

in the Instruments of thy Trouble, Religion teaches thee to look above them to the first Mover. Do this, O my Soul! with that Reverence of the Authority, and Wisdom of God that becomes thee: *Be still, and know that he is God.*

3dly, Consider thy present State may be *best for thee*; if not most agreeable to thy Inclination, yet most profitable to the Soul. Hadst thou the mixing of thy own Cup, thou wouldst soon destroy thyself. Were all bitter Ingredients taken out of it, it might be more pleasing, but less wholesome: Such a Cloud thou wouldst have scatter'd, such a Burden removed, and art importunate that *the Thorn in the Flesh* might be departed from thee: It may be the answering thy Petition would be the endangering the Soul. Oh! resign to thy God fully, and without Reserve; leave him to carve thy Portion for thee: His Wisdom is infinite, he knows what's best, and thou art assur'd of his Faithfulness and Love. *The Hairs of thy Head are all number'd: All his Paths are Mercy and Truth unto such as keep his Covenant and his Testimonies.*

*Psal. 25.*  
10.

4thly, Consider there is no State of present Things, how favourable soever, without an Alloy. There's a Vanity and Curse since the Apostacy in all our Enjoyments; and we do but deceive ourselves, when we expect so much Relief as we are apt to do, by this or that Change. We find something pinches, and makes us uneasy where we are, and as we are, and therefore are for shifting, struggling to throw off the Burden: But this is to no purpose, and is no other than the fruitless Effort of Men seeking Rest here below, but who cannot find it: Wherever we fix our Tent, even though we could chuse and from our own Circumstances, and repose ourselves under the most pleasant Gourd,  
some



some Worm or other would smite it, and make it wither. " I see, says the excellent Bishop *Leighton*, there is no Place, City nor Country, Valley nor Mountain free from that Sentence, so early pass'd upon the Earth for Man's Cause, " *Thorns and Briars shalt thou bring forth*. But he that is well shod, walks on the more safely, till he come where there are none. But since that is not here, we are to use the greater Coolness and Deliberation in our Removes: If your present Company be some Way irksome, a greater Solitude may be more so, &c." And in another Letter to the same Friend; " Thorns, says he, grow every where, and from all Things below; and to a Soul transplanted out of itself, to the Root of *Jesse*, Peace grows every where too, from him who is our Peace; and whom we shall find the more to be so, the more entirely we live in him; by being dead to this World, to Flesh and self, and all Things besides him: Oh! when shall it be? " We shall still find something amiss in every State, and if it be not our own Fault, may find Comfort in any (*i. e.*) in God, his Covenant, Promises, &c. Nor is there so much Difference in point of real Satisfaction, between one outward State and another, as we may imagine. We complain of Grievances in this or that Situation; we might find the same, or worse in another; nor can we flee from the Vanity and Vexation there is in all Things here below, till we are quite beyond them.

5thly, Consider, that the present State, whatever 'tis, will soon come to a Period; will change in Course, and all the Trouble of it terminate with it. If thou hast not so pleasing Accommodations in thy Inn, as thou desirest, 'tis but for a Day or two and thou art gone: The *Fashion of this World passeth*



1 Cor. 7.  
31.

*Sett away.* 'Tis constantly passing, and will so soon be quite pass'd away, that it is not worth while to be solicitous about a Change. The present Fashion may serve for the present Time, since a new one is just ready to take place, which will change no more for ever. O learn to moderate thy Concern about this World, and the transitory Things of it. The Time is short; *weep as though thou weepest not, rejoice as though thou rejoicest not.* The next State, now at hand, is the only State that deserves and demands thy Attention. "† What is this poor Moment;

† Bishop  
Leighton,  
in one of  
his Letters  
to a Friend.

"and all that concerns it, to the immense Eternity that we believe? and how doth one serious Thought of it shrink all Affairs, publick and private, and all this present World into nothing? What have we to think of, and when we meet, to speak of, but that, till the blessed Day come that shall let us into it?" Oh! could I read aright that big Word *Eternity*, and understand its awful Sound, it would drown the Noise of this World, and silence its Clamours in my Ears. Lord, help me to look beyond it; to withdraw my Thoughts and Affections from it; to sit down calm and easy in my State; especially since 'tis by thy Providence, and by thy Appointment: "Seeing our great Father's Love, (says the same devout Person, mention'd more than once before) descends to the ordering the low Concerns of our Life, we were very unwise and ungrateful not to observe him, and read the Print of his blessed Finger in them; who hath made Flies with so much Art, and is truly *magnus in minimis*. Courage, it shall be well! We follow a conquering General; yea, who hath conquered already: *Et qui semel vicit pro nobis, semper vincet in nobis.*" Lord, I adore thy Condescension  
and

and Goodness, that thou dost interest thyself so much in my Affairs! *What is a Man, that thou art so mindful of him; or the Son of Man, that thou visitest him?* And what am I? A poor guilty Worm! And yet thou carest for me. I would think myself sufficiently happy, and safe under thy Care; I desire not to usurp thy Province, for which I am altogether unfit, but repose myself with a calm Resignation, Complacency and Delight, under the protecting, conducting Hand of my heavenly Father.

---

*The CHRISTIAN's daily Walk.*

Prov. xxiii. 17. *Be thou in the Fear of the Lord all the Day long.*

THE sacred Writer of this Book often assumes the Character of a *Father*; addressing himself to his Catechumens, or Scholars, as *his Sons*, Not that we are to understand him, at least not chiefly, as speaking to his own Son; but rather as a *divine Teacher*, who takes this Title the better to engage the Attention and Affection of his Disciples: In the mean time he delivers his Counsels and Maxims in the Name of God, the common Father of Mankind, and under the Conduct and Inspiration of the holy Spirit. Hence we find the *Apostle*, in the *New Testament*, quoting a Passage of this Book in the usual Stile, applies it to Believers under the Gospel. So that it was not any particular Person whom *Solomon* calls Son, to whom his Admonitions here are directed: nor must they be consider'd as the private Advice of

*Thirteenth Specimen.*  
Chap. 1. 8.  
15.  
Chap. 2. 1.  
Chap. 3. 1.  
&c.

Prov. 3. 11  
12.  
Heb. 12. 5.

of this great and wise King, but as the Counsel of Heaven administer'd by him. Thus we are to understand him, when he says, *be thou in the Fear of the Lord all the Day long.*

*The Fear of the Lord* is often, in Scripture, put for Religion: As *Psal. cxi. 1. Prov. i. 7. Job. xxviii. 28.* 'Tis common to describe Religion by some eminent Branch or Grace of it; especially if it be such as has an Influence upon the whole, and be a sort of a divine Principle from whence the whole will flow: And of this Nature is the Fear of God. 'Tis not only a Monitor to our Duty, but a Principle of universal Obedience; and accordingly often stands for the whole of it: So that *to be in the Fear of the Lord all the Day long*, is to be religious all the Day; to act according to the sacred Rules and Laws of Religion.

And this includes in it such Things as these: Some just Notions and Apprehensions of God, of his Being, Perfections and Excellencies, of his constant Providence, Inspection and Presence, a Regard to his Authority, and to the Rules of Living he has prescribed, a Reverence of him, and Subjection to him as Governor, and a Sollicitude not to offend him, or transgress his Laws in any thing, It implies Constancy and Steadiness in our Course: We are to be in his Fear *all the Day long.* It implies a serious Acknowledgement of God in all our Ways, and in all his Works and Providences; and is, in a Word, what the Scripture so often represents under the Notion of *walking with God.*

Endeavour, O my Soul! to attend to this: Set the Lord always before thee; carry Religion with thee in all thou doest; let it mix with, and govern all thy Affairs. *Bind the Commandment continually upon*

*upon thy Heart, tye it about thy Neck: When thou goest it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest it shall talk with thee,* Let Religion accompany thee through all the Occurrences of every Day; prescribe Laws to thy Thoughts, Affections, Words and Actions, and conduct thee in thy whole Behaviour. Lord, help me by thy Grace thus to walk with thee; thus to be in thy Fear all the Day long: To which Purpose I would propose to my self the following Rules.

1st, I would resolve to begin every Day with God, and consecrate my first Thoughts to him. *When I awake, says the Psalmist, I am still with thee.* Not only under his Protection; for so he was when asleep as much as when awake; but he was with him, as I suppose, in the devout Temper of his Mind. I would endeavour thus to be with God, saluting him with my waking Thoughts, saying, "In thy Hand, O Lord, is my Life and Breath. I laid me down and slept, thou madest me to dwell in Safety. I worship and praise thee, O thou Preserver of Men. I commit myself to thy future Care: Keep me from the Evil, help me in the Duties of this Day; make my Way prosperous, &c.

2dly, As soon as conveniently I can, I would retire for secret, solemn Devotion; and would take care, when nothing necessary prevents, that this be my first Work: Hereby the Mind may get a religious Tincture; be fortified against Temptation, and be better prepared for Duties and Trials. *My Voice shalt thou hear in the Morning, &c.*

3dly, I would take the most proper Time to call my Family together, and worship God with them: In which I would always thankfully acknowledge the Mercy of God, in the Preservation and Safety



of the Family ; recommend myself and Family to the divine Conduct and Blessing, and bespeak his Presence with me and them in the Business of the Day.

Tom. 12.  
12.

4thly, I would apply myself to the Duties of my particular Calling, and endeavour that Religion go hand in hand with me in all. Particularly I would resolve to be *diligent* in my Calling, and as useful as I can in my Station. And as the Providence of God has set me above the Necessity of bodily Labour, I would improve that Distinction and Favour for spiritual Purposes ; spending more Time than others have at Command, in Reading, Meditation and Prayer ; in Works of Mercy and Charity ; in profitable Visits, &c. I resolve to be upright in all my Dealings, not to defraud, or go beyond any Man ; remembering that God requires a just Weight, a just Measure, and a just *Ephab*. I would take Care not to incumber myself with too great a Multiplicity of Business, lest that leave neither Time nor Heart for the Service of God. I desire to consider one Thing is needful ; *to seek first the Kingdom of God*, and not to labour for the Meat that perishes, but for that which endures to everlasting Life : Religion, and what concerns another World, *is my great Business*, which I would mainly intend, and set myself apart for ; and only submit to the Services of this World in Obedience to the Appointment of God, and in Compliance with his Providence, and the Duties of my Station. I would consecrate my common Business to God ; undertake and manage my Calling in his Name and Fear. I would be sensible of the Snares and Temptations that attend my particular Calling, and guard against them. Lastly, It shall be my Care to intermix serious Thoughts with my secular Business ; to set the Lord always before

before me, be often looking up to him, refreshing myself with something of Heaven, whilst I am engag'd in the Affairs of this Earth. Lord, help me herein by thy Grace.

5thly, I would endeavour to improve the Company my Affairs may bring me into every Day, and conduct myself therein according to the Laws of Religion; to be careful not to be the worse for any Company, and that no Company be the worse for me: To which Purpose *I would take Heed to my Ways, that I sin not with my Tongue*; would guard against much speaking, false speaking, vain speaking, &c. Two Things especially I would propose to myself: *To abstain from all hurtful Converse*; and *to aim at something profitable therein*. To abstain from *hurtful Converse*; such as defiles the Minds of Men, or wounds Religion; intrenches upon the Honour of God, and lessens the Veneration due to sacred Things; such as is hurtful to others; to the Reputation of those that are absent, or the Charity of those that are present; as Slander, Backbiting, &c. I would take Care not to provoke, or unnecessarily grieve those I converse with; as by Satyr and Raillery; by exposing and insulting over their Weaknesses and Infirmities, or assuming an undue Superiority. I would here keep in Mind that Rule, *Love as Brethren; be piteous, be courteous.* 1 Pet. 3. 8. I would also aim at something profitable; and not only let no corrupt Communication proceed out of my Mouth, but that which is good, to the Use of edifying, that it may administer Grace unto the Hearers, *I'll speak of thy Testimonies, says David, before Kings, and will not be ashamed,* 1 *Psal. 119.* 46. I would not be ashamed of owning God and Religion on proper Occasions, but would watch Opportunities, when in fit Company, to introduce something of Religion, at least in occasional Hints;

Making suitable Remarks on such Providences as the Conversation leads to; now and then inserting a Word of gentle Admonition, or Reproof to a Friend, as there is Occasion. Grant me herein, O my God! the Zeal and Prudence that is necessary.

6thly, I would resolve in the Refreshments of the Day, when I come to my stated Meals, to bring my Religion along with me, and still be in the Fear of the Lord; to observe the Rules of Temperance and Sobriety; to beg a Blessing on my Food, return thanks, and be serious in both,  
*Mark. 8.6. Whether I eat or drink, or whatever I do, I would do*  
*Acts 27.35 all to the Glory of God.* Nor

7thly, Would I leave Religion out of my Diversions, but manage these also in the Fear of the Lord: To which Purpose I would resolve to use no Diversions, but such as I may decently beg a Blessing upon; would be cautious in the Choice of them, and not only avoid such as are in themselves sinful, but such as are full of Snares, and don't comport with the Gravity of the Christian Profession: I would always use them with an Eye to the proper End they serve for, *viz.* an unbending the Mind for a time, and a Relaxation from more severe Business, that I may come again to it with greater Life and Spirit. I would use them for the Health of the Body, the refreshing the Mind, and fitting me for the more chearful Service of God; and consequently I would spend no more Time in them than these Ends require. And with these, and the like Cautions, I reckon Diversions may not only be reconciled to Religion, and made consistent with it, but made to minister to it; I might say made Exercises of it.

8thly, I



8thly, I would endeavour that my Thoughts, Affections and Passions be kept under the Influence of Religion all the Day long. *Let not thy Heart envy Sinners, but be thou in the Fear of the Lord.* Religion, or the Fear of God, will not only restrain from gross, outward Acts of Sin, but suppress sinful Desires and Motions within. O my God! all Things are naked and open to thy Eyes; *thou searchest and knowest me; knowest my sitting down, and rising up, and understandest my Thoughts afar off. Thou compasshest my Paths, and art acquainted with all my Ways, &c.* Help me to reverence thy Presence: Darkness hideth not from thee, but the Night shineth as the Day; the Darkness and the Light are both alike to thee: What passes in the Darkness of the Mind is exposed to thy View; thou readest the most retir'd Thoughts more certainly than others can the Actions. I would always set thee before me, at my right Hand; and not only speak and act, but think, desire, &c. as under thy Eye. Psal. 139. 1

9thly, I would resolve every Night to spend some time in suitable Exercises of Religion; to make, at least, a short Review of the Affairs of the Day; with such Acknowledgements to God in Thanksgiving, Confession, &c. as the Matter requires. Nor would I be content to close the Day without some warm Devotion, and a Heart affected with what has occur'd in the Course of the Day.

10thly, I desire always to commit myself to bed, and go to sleep with God upon my Thoughts: To which Purpose, whilst undressing, and preparing for Rest, I would entertain myself with serious Reflections and Ejaculations; endeavouring to fall asleep in the midst of divine Soliloquies and Breathings; communing with my own Heart upon my Bed. This will probably have a good Influence upon the Imagination in Dreams; make my Rest calm



and comfortable, and prepare me when I awake, to be still with God.

O my Soul intend and pursue such a Course: 'Tis the Way of Life and Peace, is attended with Profit and Pleasure, and has every thing in it that's recommending: Nor need the Difficulties of it discourage; divine Grace will help to surmount these; and indeed they are less than many submit to in Matters of infinitely less Moment, and even in such Pursuits as are hurtful and pernicious. What so great Difficulty, for Instance, in thinking of God in the Morning when I awake? Some Thought I must have; the Mind can't be idle. And why may I not think of God as well as of the World, or my Lusts? Why may I not devise liberal and pious Things on my Bed, as well as devise Mischief on the Bed, as the Character of some is; or let my Thoughts run waste and spend themselves in fruitless Musings? Why may not the Christian, in his Converse with others, reverently mention the Name of God, and bless in his Name, as well as others profanely curse in his Name: Methinks the one should be as easy to the Christian, as the Language of Hell to the Sinner, and certainly 'tis not less honourable.

In short, there is nothing in this Course but what is highly advantageous, every Way worthy of the rational Nature; tending to the Improvement, Perfection, and Comfort of it; nothing of unreasonable Restraint and Confinement. *I will walk at Liberty*, says David, *for I have sought thy Precepts*. It requires indeed a Gravity and Composure; an habitual Sense of God upon the Mind: But this is so far from being irksome, that to a Soul, in any good measure purified and disentangled from the Slavery of Sin and Sense, 'tis its Life and its Joy. Such a one does not lose;

lose, only *changes* his Pleasures; only quits some imaginary, fantastick Pleasures, for Pleasures infinitely more refined and excellent. O my God! teach me my Duty! help me to meditate in thy Precepts, and to have Respect unto thy Ways; to rejoice in the Way of thy Testimonies as much as in all Riches. *My Soul breaketh for the Longing that it hath to thy Judgment at all times. Turn away mine Eyes from beholding Vanity, and quicken me in thy Way. Shed abroad thy Love in my Heart; draw me and I shall run after thee: May I set thee always before me, and be in the Fear of the Lord all the Day long.*

---

Of CHRISTIAN Watchfulness.

Rev. xvi. 15. *Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his Garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his Shame.*

**W**atching, in Strictness, is a Property of the <sup>Fourteenth</sup> Body, and opposed to Sleeping: As applied <sup>Specimen.</sup> to the Mind, it is taken in a metaphorical Sense, and imports Attention, Care and Caution, in the Affairs of our Souls, and of Religion; and especially a due Guard against the Enemies and Dangers that threaten us. 'Tis a Duty of universal Concernment, often enjoin'd by our great Lord and Master. 'Tis a Duty of great Extent; <sup>Matt. 24. 42.</sup> reaches to all Times, and all the Circumstances <sup>Matt. 25: 13.</sup> of a Christian. We are to be constantly, and every where, upon our Watch in some Measure, or we cannot be safe. We have many Things <sup>Mark 13. 35, 36, 37</sup> to watch against; as the World, and its various <sup>Rev. 3. 2, 3.</sup>

*Luk. 21. 34* Snares, the Devil and his Stratagems, against the  
*1 John 2. 15.* Infection of evil Company, against our Friends,  
*1 Pet. 5. 8.* when they become Tempters, as sometimes they  
*Exod. 23. 2.* do, against our own Corruptions, especially the  
*Prov. 1. 10.* Sins of Constitution. We have many Things to  
*Prov. 5. 8.* watch over, as our Hearts, Desires, Affections,  
*Mark 8. 33.* Passions, our Words, our Appetites, and Senses.  
*Acts 21. 13.* In these Things the Christian's Watch must be em-  
*Gal. 2. 11.* ployed: And how difficult, how important the  
*Psal 18. 23.* Work! Assist me, O my God, by thy Grace:  
*Heb. 12. 1.* *Work! Assist me, O my God, by thy Grace:*  
*1 Pet. 5. 7.* *Except the Lord keep the City* (unless he defend the  
*Psal 39. 1.* Soul) *the Watchman walketh but in vain.*  
*Psal 141. 3.* For what Purpose we are to watch we are  
*Psal 141. 4.* told; namely, *to keep our Garments, lest we walk*  
*Job 31. 1.* *naked, and they see our Shame.* The Christian's  
*Prov. 23. 31.* Graces are his Garments. Thus the Scripture  
*Psal 127. 1.* represents them. Hence we read of being *cloath-*  
*1 Pet. 5. 5.* *ed with Humility*, of the Ornament of a meek  
and quiet Spirit; are bid to *buy white Raiment,*  
*that we may be clothed, and that the Shame of our*  
*Rev. 3. 18* *Nakedness do not appear.* And the King's Daugh-  
*ter* (i. e.) the Church, is said to be *all glorious*  
*within, and to have her Cloathing of fine wrought Gold.*  
*Psal 45. 13* These are our Garments; and we *keep them*, when  
we preserve them in a due State, and in vigorous  
Exercise: And on the other hand, *We walk naked,*  
and they see our Shame, when the several Graces,  
that should adorn our Life and Conversation, are  
suspended, and left out of it; and we come forth,  
and appear without our Ornaments.

I might illustrate this by running through the  
several divine Graces, a Catalogue of which we have,  
*2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7. Gal. v. 22, 23. Eph. v. 9. Add*  
*to your Faith Virtue, to your Virtue Knowledge, &c.*

Now

Now when the Christian suffers present Things to prevail with him, and the Objects of Sense to carry it in a Competition with the Objects of *Faith*, he appears destitute of *that Grace*, and is so far naked. When he pursues this World with a resolute Fondness, through any Measures, and in Neglect of God, his Soul, and another World; his *Faith* is eclipsed and lost; this great Ornament is torn from him: So when he acts cowardly in his Profession, and through slavish Fear of Man, or any temporal Inconvenience, he neglects and deserts his Duty to God, and violates Conscience; the Grace and Ornament of *Virtue*, or Christian Fortitude and Courage is laid aside. How naked in this Respect did *Peter* appear, when he denied his Master? And how did Men see his Shame? When he acts rashly and unskilfully in Matters of Religion, be-<sup>Mark 14.</sup>  
<sup>68, 71.</sup>trays a gross Ignorance of the Rules and Maxims of Christian Wisdom and Prudence, laid down in the Gospel; he wants the *Knowledge* he should add to his Virtue and so far is *naked*. And the same may be observ'd, with Reference to Temperance, Patience, Godliness, Brotherly-Kindness, Charity, &c. When he *makes Provision for the Flesh*, to fulfil the Lusts thereof, and in any gross Instances, violates the Laws of Sobriety; he is off his Guard, and exposes himself in the filthy Guise of a Sensualist: When he frets under the Discipline of God, and his Passions break forth into a Tumult, Mutiny and Rebellion, instead of a calm and silent Submission; when forgetting the great Laws of Meekness, Quietness, Brotherly-Kindness, and Charity, he gives Way to Hatred, Variance, Emulation, Wrath, Strife, Envyings, Bitterness, Clamour, and evil speaking; when in-  
stead



*Eph. 5. 9* *stead of all Goodness, Righteousness and Truth. Selfishness, Hurtfulness, Injustice, Oppression, Falshood, Deceit, and Lying prevail; when instead of Humility, Lowliness of Mind, and Modesty, Pride, Haughtiness, Conceit, and vain Ostentation shew themselves in his Converse and Behaviour; then the Christian walks naked, and they see his Shame.*

O my Soul! how often hast thou forgot thyself, let down thy Watch, and come forth in thy Nakedness; with the Garments of Faith, Patience, Sobriety and Meekness, Charity and Goodness, *rent and torn*? How often hast thou wanted the Courage and Presence of Mind that becomes the Christian? How often has Cowardice and Lowness of Spirit betrayed thee to neglect thy Duty, and into sinful Compliances? How often has Pride of Countenance, a haughty Look, Roughness and Insolence of Behaviour disgrac'd thee? How often the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit been laid aside, and that Humbleness of Mind forgot, which thou should'st have put on, and constantly kept on? Hast thou not been guilty of backbiting with thy Tongue, of uttering Deceit, speaking great swelling Words of Vanity, when the Law of Kindness and Truth should have been in thy Tongue! How often hast thou indulged thy Passions and Appetites, against the Rules of Reason and Religion, thereby laying thy Honour in the Dust? Be humbled, O my Soul! upon the Review of these Things, and set thyself on a stronger Guard for the future. *Watch and pray, that thou enterest not into Temptation.* Lord, grant me all the bright Ornaments, the Graces of thy Spirit. and may they govern in my Heart and Life. Help me to cherish and improve them, live and act under their Influences always, to watch and keep my Garments, *lest I walk naked, and they see my Shame.*

Of

## Of the CHRISTIAN'S Strength.

2 Cor. xii. 10. *For when I am weak, then am I strong.*

**N**O doubt there are different Degrees, of Grace in real Christians: Some are strong, others weak, Some are *Bates*, and carnal, others are spiritual, Timothy is exhorted to be strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus. The Apostle takes Notice of the *Theſſalonians*, that their Faith grew exceedingly, and their mutual Charity abounded; so that he gloried in them for their Patience and Faith in all their Persecution and Tribulation. And we are bid to add to our Faith, Virtue, to Virtue Knowledge, to Knowledge Temperance, &c. that these Things being in us, and abounding, we may be neither barren nor unfruitful in the Knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Divine Graces, as they are Habits of the Mind, are capable of great Improvement, and are advanced to a much higher Pitch in some than in others.

Notwithstanding, I don't think that the Christian's Strength and Ability for Action, in the divine Life, arises chiefly from the Furniture and Stock of habitual Grace; but rather from the Concurrence and Assistance of the great Author of Grace. *I can do all Things*, says the Apostle, *through Christ, which strengtheneth me*, Not who hath strengthened me, by former Communications of divine Grace, but who now strengtheneth, and constantly strengtheneth by his Spirit, as my Occasions require. *I laboured, yet not I, but the Grace of God that was with me.* In short, I suppose

*Fifteenth Specimen.*

*Rom. 15. 1*

*1 Cor. 3. 1*

*2 Tim. 2. 1*

*2 Theſſ. 1. 3, 4.*

*2 Pet. 1. 5.*

*6, 7, 8.*

*Phil. 4. 14*

*1 Cor. 13. 10.*

I suppose the Christian's Strength to lie in a *steady, constant Dependence on God*. If *Peter* be self-confident, notwithstanding his Virtue, Courage and Zeal, it will soon appear how frail and impotent he is. *When I am weak*, says the *Apostle*, *then I am strong*. He can't mean, that when he had little Grace he had much, and was strong in Grace; that's a Contradiction: But his Meaning, I reckon, must be, that when he was in Circumstances of greatest Difficulty, surrounded with the most threatening Enemies and Dangers, and had the greatest Sense of his own Infirmary and Inability, then he found himself strong; *strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might*. The Case is the same with every Christian, in all the eminent Trials of his Life. When he has learnt to distrust himself, renounce all Self-confidence and Self-sufficiency, and with a humble, believing Eye look up to Heaven, and set his Hope on God; *then is he strong*. God says to him, my Grace is sufficient for thee, my Strength is made perfect in Weakness. Some have compared, not unfitly, the presumptuous Sinner to the *Hare*, that relies on her own Swiftnes for † Safety: and the humble Christian to the *Rabbit*, that, in her Danger, takes Sanctuary in the Rock. Lord! teach me the great Secret of Dependence on thyself: Whatever Improvements I have made in Wisdom, or fancy I have made, I would not lean to my own Understanding, but trust in the Lord with all my Heart. I would not rely on my own Resolution or Courage, on any of the Attainments, which by thy Grace I have already made; but would consider my Springs are in thee, and all my Sufficiency from thee: Accordingly I desire to wait upon thee, that I may daily renew my Strength; run, and not be weary; walk, and not faint. Help me to live believing, resigning,

† *Pedibus  
petit ille  
salutem.*

reſigning, depending ; and the more reduced and emptied of ſelf I am, the more I diſtruſt my own Arm ; the more Reaſon I have to expect the Help of thine. *When I am weak, then am I ſtrong.*

*Of the Excellency of Holineſs, Obedience, and good Works.*

Pſal. xlv. 13. *The King's Daughter is all glorious within ; her Cloathing is of wrought Gold.*

'TIS Matter of Surprize, that any who are acquainted with their Bible. and take that for the Rule of their Religion, ſhould ſpeak ſo contemptibly as they do of Obedience and good Works : As if to recommend and preſs them was Legalism, and to ſtudy and practiſe them vain and needleſs. Different Reaſons, I ſuppoſe, may be aſſigned for this Humour, the depreciating Obedience, or good Works.

1ſt, Some are led into it from a miſtaken Notion of Humility ; as if they might not think meanly of themſelves, without undervaluing the the Grace Of God ; and deſpiſe themſelves for their own Deformities and Blemiſhes, without denying the Beauty and Excellency of the divine Image. In ſhort, Humility, as it reſpects this Matter, conſiſts not in low Thoughts of Holineſs and Obedience, but in a juſt Reſentment of our little Attainments therein.

2dly, Some ſeem to think a Zeal for good Works and Obedience derogates from the Merits of Chriſt, the Compleatneſs of his Righteouſneſs ; as if our Works and Obedience could ſafely ſtand in no Place, unleſs they be ſet in Chriſt's Place ; and could ſignify



nify *nothing*, unless they signify *every thing*. Christ's Obedience and Righteousness are of a distinct Consideration from ours, have an higher Office and Sphere, belong to another Covenant, and serve different Purposes. He fully accomplish'd what he undertook; his Work is finished and accepted: Nor does it need, or can admit of any Supplement from us. Our Righteousness is inferior and subordinate, but equally necessary in the Covenant wherein we stand, and for the Ends it refers to, with the perfect, unspotted Righteousness of the Mediator in his Covenant.

3dly, Others are betrayed into a Neglect and Disparagement of Obedience, Holiness, and good Works, from a Fancy, that an Obedience, so defective as theirs, is worthless, and will avail them nothing. They pretend they dare appear before a perfectly righteous, and holy God, in no Righteousness but what is perfect; and their own Righteousness being, at best, so very imperfect, they are apt to conclude it useless and worthless. And hence a confident Reliance on the Righteousness of Christ, which they take to be the Faith the Gospel requires, passes with them for every thing. But if by *perfect Righteousness* they mean *absolutely perfect*, 'tis certain the Angels have no such Righteousness: None are perfect as God is perfect. *He charges his Angels with Folly.* Every one appears before God in the State and Condition he is in. The Mediator in his proper Excellencies and Glory, the Angels in theirs, the Spirits of the just in theirs; which are more or less, according to their different Attainments. In the mean time no Creature has a perfect Righteousness, nor can he appear before God in any such Righteousness: But if he be *truly* righteous, he is accepted of God, notwithstanding defects. *The righteous Lord loveth Righteousness,*  
and

*and his Countenance beholdeth the Upright, Psal. xi.*

5. He loveth all the Righteous, and that according to the Measure of their real Righteousness and Goodness; and tho' none have a perfect Righteousness, all good Men have so much Righteousness (*i. e.*) Likeness of God, Conformity to his Nature and Will, Rectitude and Holiness of Heart and Frame, as renders them fit Objects of his Favour and Love. Indeed Mankind having apostatiz'd, *all having sinn'd, and come short of the Glory of God*, having departed from the original Law of Righteousness, the Rule of perfect innocent Nature; all need the Grace of the Mediator, and of the new Dispensation of Religion, establish'd through him: His perfect Righteousness is the Foundation of that Covenant in which they are, and of the Hopes they have of Acceptance with God. The most righteous are Sinners, and are saved by Mercy and Grace, *through the Redemption that is in Christ. God hath chosen us, that we should be holy, and without Blame before him in Love*: But as our Holiness, in its greatest Advances, has its Flaws and Imperfections in this Life, *he hath made us accepted in the beloved*.

Other Things might be taken Notice of as contributing to this Mistake, about good Works and Obedience; but I reckon them all Temptations, and as such would guard against them. I must give away my Bible, and change my Notion of Religion, and even of Heaven, before I can come into their Measures, that would represent good Works as unnecessary, and Holiness of little Worth: Certainly I may be humble and vile in my own Eyes, and yet maintain a Reverence for Holiness and Obedience; and indeed I would therefore think myself vile, because I have no more of it. I may reserve

reserve to the Lord Jesus the Glory of his Office, and triumph in his Righteousness, and yet not neglect a subordinate, personal Righteousness of my own ; without which I can have no Interest in his Righteousness, no title to his Salvation: His Righteousness was not designed to supersede ours, nor must it be substituted in its Stead ; in many Things it was the Pattern and Rule of our Righteousness, and in all an Encouragement and Excitement to it. When we see God would not pardon the Violations of his Law, till his Son had done Honour to it by a perfect Obedience, nor receive Sinners into Favour, but upon the Atonement he made ; we may be sure he won't forgive the impenitent, nor save the unholy. In short, Christ's Righteousness was to make Way for ours, to encourage it, not to exclude it.

O my Soul ! let nothing tempt thee to low Thoughts of that which is thy greatest Excellency, and should be thy constant Ambition, *viz. the Glory within, the Cloathing of wrought Gold*: Let nothing divert thee from the general comprehensive Duty and Business of Life, *the following Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord*.

There is an intrinsic Value and Goodness in Holiness and Obedience ; to love God with all our Heart, Soul, and Mind ; to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present, evil World: As 'tis the great Lesson the Gospel teaches, so 'tis a Duty of unchangeable Obligation, arising out of the Nature and Reason of Things. Whilst God is what he is, (*viz.*) a Being of infinite Perfection, and Man continues such a Creature as God has made him, plac'd in such Relations as he stands in, both towards God and his Fellow-Creatures ; he's everlastingly obliged to all the Duties of Godliness ; *i. e.* to Love, Fear, Reverence, Worship, Trust, and



and obey God; to live according to the Rules of Justice and Mercy with his Neighbour, and govern himself by the Laws of Sobriety, Temperance, &c. These are Duties that have a natural Decency and Fitness in them, and can never cease to be the Duties of reasonable Creatures.

Nor were they ever dispensed with under any Dispensation of Religion. Even the Law of Ceremonies, given by *Moses* to the *Jews*, had many Documents of the Necessity of moral Holiness and Obedience, and when the Duties of this Nature were neglected, all their Zeal for external Services became vain and ineffectual, as is evident from the Sermons of the Prophets; not to say that it might be Part of the Design of God, in appointing them such numerous Rites (some of which, probably, they knew no other Reason for, but the Pleasure of the Lawgiver) to train them up to an intire implicit Subjection to his own Will, which is the Substance of all Obedience. I might add their Sacrifices, as Means of Absolution, were also Arguments against Sin, and for Obedience. The Death of the Sacrifice was an Admonition to him that brought it, concerning the Evil of Sin, and his own Desert as a Sinner, and call'd upon him to repent and reform; to which it was also a Motive, as it gave him Grounds to hope for the divine Favour: *There is Forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared*, Psal. cxxx. 4. So that even this State of Religion, which seemed to have the least of Morality in it, not only supposed and included moral Duties and Obedience, but was calculated to promote them.

And 'tis evident, even to a Demonstration, that this also is the great Design of the Gospel, namely, the advancing of Holiness and Obedience. 'Tis the Design of Christ's Life, Doctrine, Miracles, Death and Sacrifice; of his Advocacy with the



Father, and of the whole Office of the Paraclete, or Spirit of God, *Eph. v. 26, 27. Tit. ii. 14 Gal. v. 22, 23. We are chosen, that we might be holy, Eph. i. 4. Called with an holy Calling, 2 Tim, i. 9. Are created in Christ Jesus unto good Works ; which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them, Eph. ii. 10. We are saved by the washing of Regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, Tit. iii. 5.*

† Communion  
with Fa-  
ther, Son,  
and Holy  
Ghost,  
p. 213.

“ God hath appointed, says Dr. † Owen, that Holiness shall be the Means, the Way to that eternal  
“ Life, which, as in itself, and originally it is his  
“ Gift by Jesus Christ ; so with Regard to his  
“ Constitution of our Obedience, as the Means  
“ of attaining it, is a *Reward*, and God in bestow-  
“ ing of it, a *Rewarder* ; though it be neither the  
“ Cause, Matter or Condition of our Justification,  
“ yet it is the Way appointed of God for us to  
“ walk in, for the obtaining of Salvation : And  
“ therefore he that hath Hope of eternal Life, *pu-*  
“ *rifies himself as he is pure* : And none shall ever  
“ come to that End, who walketh not in that Way ;  
“ *for without Holiness, 'tis impossible to see God.*

In short, the Scripture every where represents the Necessity of Holiness, Obedience, and moral Righteousness, and comments upon its Excellency in the strongest Terms. *Eccles. xii. 13. Isa. i. 16, 17, 18. Mat. vii. 22, 23. Rom. ii. 6, - - - 12. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11. Heb. v. 9. 1 John iii. 7. Rev. xxii. 14.* Indeed the whole Bible runs in this Strain ; 'tis the Voice of both Testaments : In a Word, *Holiness* is the Image of God restored, *Eph. iv. 24.* the great Ornament of our Nature, *Psal. xlv. 13.* our Preparation for Heaven, *Mat. v. 8.* and a good Measure of Heaven itself, *Psal. xvii. 1, 5. Heb. xii. 23.*

O my God ! teach me thy Statutes ; hide not thy Commandments from me ; guide me in the  
Way

Way that I should chuse : May a Sense of the Excellency of Holiness attract my Desires ; raise my Esteem, and quicken my Pursuits ; and may a Sense of my own Imperfections and Meannets lead me to adore the Provisions of thy Grace, to depend on the Righteousness. and plead the Merit of my Redeemer. I would do every Thing in the Name of Christ ; believe, repent, obey ; still acting Faith in his Blood ; applying to him as my Peace-maker, and Advocate with the Father ; would live and die *with my Hand upon the Head of that glorious Victim.* This Humility and Recumbence becomes my State ; 'tis thy Will and Appointment, Part of my Obedience and Righteousness. Lord, form and frame me according to thy Gospel ; may I perfect Holiness in thy Fear, *looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal Life.*

---

### Of Habitual REPENTANCE.

Isa. lvii. 15. *Thus says the high and lofty one, I dwell in the high and holy Place ; with him also that is of a contrite and humble Spirit ; to revive the Spirit of the humble, and to revive the Heart of the contrite one.*

**R**epentance, in the Theological, Scripture Sense, is the Sinner's Return to God, and to his Duty. Sin is a Digression from the Paths of God's Commandments, makes a Chasm or Breach in the Course of our Obedience ; Repentance brings us back, and sets us in the Way again. There are several Adjuncts and Circumstances of Repentance, which Men are apt to rest in, instead of the thing itself :

itself: Such as Confession, Tears, and other Expressions of Humiliation; these often accompany Repentance, but are not Repentance; even *godly Sorrow* is something distinct from it, as the *Apostle* intimates, 2 Cor. vii. 10. *It worketh Repentance.*

Besides the *First* and *Original* Repentance, as I may call it, a Repentance from dead Works, which includes a Change of Mind, and a Change of Life consequent thereupon, and is the same with Conversion; there is an *after*, and *habitual* Repentance: The former is the Sinner's entering upon a Course of Religion, is one of his first Works, and cannot properly be repeated: *Just Persons need no Repentance*, Luke xv. 7. But the other (*viz.*) the *habitual* Repentance concerns every good Man, and will be his Duty as long as he's in a State of Sin and Imperfection; and I reckon it consists in what the Scripture calls *Poverty of Spirit* (*viz.*) in great Lowliness, Humility, and Self-Abasement; a Temper, which as it well becomes the most righteous Person upon Earth, so 'tis an Ornament in the Sight of God of great Price, Matt. v. 3. *Isa.* lvii. 15. *Isa.* lxvi. 2. *To this Man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at my Word.* All true Christians have something of this Spirit, though their Attainments are different in this, as well as in other Excellencies: All are humbled and abased; all are poor in Spirit, and live repenting, though not alike so.

The Foundation of this Temper, which I have chose to call *Habitual Repentance*, is laid in the first humbling Work of Grace upon the Soul. *Saul the Pharisee* was cured of his Pride, when God touched his Heart from Heaven; not that he needed no farther Discipline: He was afterwards in Danger of being lifted up above Measure; to prevent which, he had a Thorn in the Flesh, the Messenger



senger of Satan sent to buffet him. The Christian is at first humbled, reduced, and laid low, emptied of self, in some Measure; but ordinarily he passes through a Variety of humbling Providences, appointed by God for that Purpose, before he is brought to a confirmed Humility. 'Tis one of the more sublime Graces, notwithstanding its Name; what belongs to Christians of the highest Form in Religion, and is the Result of much Experience.

It arises from a nearer View of the divine Excellency, *Job. xlii. 5, 6.* from a Consideration of the Purity and Perfection of the divine Law, *Rom. vii. 14.* from the sense the Christian has of his own Vileness, Meanness and Unworthiness, when he compares himself with God, the Purity of his Nature, and of his Law: Such Infirmities as others overlook, often throw him into a Posture of the deepest Abasement; as the Motions of Pride, Envy, Vanity, Uncharitableness, Want of Devotion in divine Worship, disorderly Affections, ungoverned Passions, &c. It arises from a Remembrance of former Sins; the Christian frequently returns to these in his Thoughts, and drops a Tear over them. *I was a Blasphemer, says the Apostle, a Persecutor, and injurious:* Hereupon, though he had obtain'd Mercy, he styles himself *the chief of Sinners*, *1 Tim. i. 13, 15.* So *David*, though God *had put away his Sin*, and told him he *should not die*, *2 Sam. xii. 13.* yet he himself leaves it on Record in a Penitential Psalm (*Psal. li.*) which, no question, was often the Subject of a humbling Meditation to him. In a Word, the Christian falls so much short of what he would be and do, and of what he purposes and proposes to himself, that the Consideration thereof exceedingly humbles him: He aims high, has great Things in View; intire Conquest over his Corruptions, a constant Recti-



tude of Heart and Frame, a Readiness to every good Work; a Disposition and Ability for all Duties, both towards God and Man: But alas! how far does he drop short? How often does he fall in the Dirt? *He finds a Law in his Members warring against the Law of his Mind; the Flesh lusting against the Spirit, so that he cannot do the Things he would:* And this abases him, lays him low, and keeps him low. Hence he cries out, *O wretched Man, who shall deliver me!* He can't reach the Mark he aims at; so far from it, that he thinks he has done as good as nothing; and therefore, *forgetting the Things that are behind*, looking upon past Attainments as of little Account, he presses forward. And oh! how suitable such a Temper to the present State of Things with Christians! even the best of them? How suitable to myself in particular, compass'd about with so many Infirmities? Lord, grant me such a Sight of myself, as may effectually humble me: May I not think myself increased in Goods, to be rich, and have need of nothing, when I am poor and miserable, and blind, and naked: Help me to anoint my Eyes with Eye-salve, that I may see. I am indeed poor; may I have a true Sense of it, and a Poverty of Spirit, a Contrition of Heart answerable to my Case.

*Habitual Repentance*, or the contrite Spirit, where it prevails, will not be concealed, but has many Ways of Expression. Particularly it shews itself in Strains of great Self-Abasement: *I am carnal*, says the *Apostle*, Rom. vii. 14. *The chief of Sinners*, 1 Tim. i. 15. *Less than the least of all Saints*, Eph. iii. 8. And as if he was not yet low enough, we find him elsewhere humbling himself even to Annihilation, 2 Cor. xii. 11. Pity a poor Worm and Devil. Lord, here's a poor Hell-hound and Devil lying at my Foot; expressions, frequent in the

the Devotions of some Penitents I have read of: And though such Forms, in themselves, are no certain Tokens of Humility; yet, when the inward Frame answers them, as it sometimes exceeds them, they have an Excellency in them. Thou art Heaven, but I am Hell, says the Martyr.

It shews itself in a Meekness and quiet Submission, not only under the afflicting Hand of God, but under the oppressing, injurious Hand of Man. The humble Christian, that daily lays himself in the Dust, can bear it when others do so too.

It shews itself in admiring Thoughts of the divine Bounty, both in common Providence and in special Instances of Favour. *I am not worthy of the least of thy Mercies, thou hast shewed unto thy Servant,* Gen. xxxii. 10. *Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my House, that thou hast brought me hither-to?* 1 Chron. xvii. 16. And says the Apostle *To me, who am less than the least of all Saints, is this Grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable Riches of Christ,* Eph. iii. 8. He that's humble, and of a contrite Spirit, sets another Value upon Mercies than Pride will agree to. When God punishes, he owns 'tis less than Sin deserves; and when he blesses, he celebrates Grace in it; rich, sovereign Grace; Grace that he wants a Name for, sufficient to express the Sense he has of the Thing.

It shews itself in Worship, and in the Manner of the Christian's Addresses to God. Words can but faintly represent the Abasement and Humility with which Men of this Spirit approach the most High: They are all *Publicans* in this respect, *standing afar off, smiting on the Breast, and crying, God be merciful to us, Sinners,* Luke xviii. 13. And sometimes the divine Passion lays them prostrate on the Face, and vents itself in a Flood of Tears. *They will not lift up so much as their Eyes to Heaven.* It

† Bishop  
Leighton.

was not only the Language of his own Heart, but that of many others, which a † devout Person expresses, in a Letter to his Friend; and as it contains the Substance of what I have been saying, I shall here subjoin it: " I have nothing to say of Affairs private or publick, and to strike up to Discourses of Devotion. Alas! what is here to be said, but what you sufficiently know, and daily think? And I am beaten back, if I had a Mind to speak of such Things, by the Sense of so great Deficiency, in doing those Things that the most ignorant among Christians cannot but know. Instead of all fine Notions I fly to *Κυριε ελεησον*, *Χριστε ελεησον*; Lord have Mercy. I think them the greatest Heroes, and most excellent Persons in the World, that attain to high Degrees of pure Contemplation and divine Love: But next to these them that, in aspiring to that, and falling short of it, fall down into deep Humility and Self-contempt. And I believe that they who sink lowest into that Deep, stand nearest to Advancement to those other Heights; for that great King, who is the Fountain of Honour, has given us this Character of himself, that he resisteth the Proud, but gives Grace to the humble. Farewel, my dear Friend, and be so charitable as sometimes, in your Addresses upwards, to remember a poor Caitiff, who no Day forgets you.

It shews itself in frequent, solemn Confessions and Acknowledgments of Sin, in which the Heart and life is laid open, and all the Vileness thereof enlarged upon in Strains of Humiliation, that some Christians understand; but no Words can interpret to Strangers and the Unexperienc'd.

It shews itself in an habitual Gravity and Composure of Mind: Indeed there is more or less of this,



this, according to Persons natural or acquir'd Tempers. Nor must it be thought that the Contrition and Humility I am speaking of, excludes Chearfulness and Rejoycing: As in the midst of Mirth the Heart of the Sinner is often sad, so in the midst of this Seriousness, Sedateness and Gravity, there's often a *Joy unspeakable, and full of Glory*. However, 'tis certain such a Temper excludes Frothiness and Levity, and will ordinarily form the Converse, Deportment, and even Countenance into a decent Gravity. 'Tis said of Bishop *Leighton*, that those who knew him most and longest declar'd, that in a Course of many Years Acquaintance, they scarce ever saw him once out of that deeply serious Frame, in which they themselves wish'd to be found in their last Minutes: This was extraordinary; but other Christians, according to the Degree of their Humility and Contrition, know something of the like Temper.

It shews itself in a Weariness of this World, as a State of so much Vanity, such low Attainments, such great and frequent Disappointments in the best Pursuits; where there is a constant Warfare, and yet comparatively little Victory and Success; ardent Breathings after God and Heaven, and yet a Clog, a dead Weight at the Foot, drawing down the aspiring Soul. This, whilst it humbles, inflames the Desire, and makes the Christian groan for Deliverance, *Rom. vii. 24.* “ \* I think I \* Bishop  
 “ have given up, saith one, with the contemptible *Leighton*.  
 “ Desires and Designs of this present World; and  
 “ must have either something beyond them all, or  
 “ nothing at all: And though this base Clod of  
 “ Earth still depresses me, I am glad that because  
 “ it does so, I loath and despise it.” And in another Letter, “ I find daily more and more Reason  
 “ without me, and within me yet much more, to  
 “ pant



“pant and long to be gone: *Hei, bei mihi, quia*  
 “*prolongatus est incolatus meus.* I am grown ex-  
 “ceeding restif to Writing and to Speaking, yea,  
 “almost to Thinking, when I think what doth  
 “it do, and withal how cloudy our clearest  
 “Thoughts are; but I think again, what other  
 “can we do, till the Day break, and the Shadows  
 “flee away: As one that lieth awake in the Night  
 “must be thinking; and one Thought that will  
 “likely oftneft return, when by all the other he  
 “finds little Relief, is, when will it be † Day.”  
 Oh! when, when will it be Day, says the humble,  
 contrite Christian, mourning under the Darkness  
 and Coldness of present Night?

O my

† I have taken Liberty to insert several Passages from the  
 Letters of this great and divine Man; most of them are per-  
 tinent to my Purpose, and all of them breathe an uncommon  
 Spirit of Devotion. Had more of his Letters been preserved,  
 they would have been a good Supplement to the Account  
 Bishop Burnet has given of him in his late History, and might  
 have furnish'd Materials for a Narrative of a devout Life, which  
 would have been entertaining to many: But as these few  
 Fragments will not be sufficient for such a Purpose, I thought  
 fit to take this Way to preserve them. The Reader will ex-  
 cuse me if I add a few Passages more, very much in the same  
 Strain, with what I have already mentioned. The truly great  
 Man, it seems, thought himself neither fit to write nor speak,  
 so profound was his Humility; and therefore took Care, as  
 far as he could, that nothing of his should remain: But I am  
 persuaded few thought so besides himself: but rather will think  
 it Pity that any thing he spoke or wrote should be lost. “I be-  
 “lieve, says he to his Correspondent, you carry about you  
 “every where that Indifferency to external Events, and that  
 “absolute Confidence in the supream Hand that orders them,  
 “which is the great Principle of Peace and Calmness of Mind,  
 “amidst the Fluctuations of human Affairs” And in ano-  
 ther Letter, when he was deliberating about accepting a Bi-  
 shoprick, as I conjecture, he thus writes: - “One Comfort I  
 “have, that in what is pressed on me, there is the least of my  
 “own

O my Soul! study and pray for more of this divine Temper; a Humility and Abasement that answers the Lowness and Meanness of thy State. I desire to remember what once I was, *when a Child of Wrath, a Vessel fitted for Destruction*: I desire to retain a constant Sense of what I still am; a Mass of Folly, Impurity and Sin. To be proud of such a Heart, or *with such a Heart*, is shameful Stupidity. I desire to remember my more remarkable Failings and Follies, particularly in such a Scene of Life, and at such a Time when --- How often have I acted a Part, more worthy a Brute than a Man! For Instance --- O Wretch! so ignorant and foolish was I, I was as a Beast before thee: But  
though

---

own Choice, yea, on the contrary, the strongest Aversion that ever I had in any thing in all my Life. The Truth is, I am yet importuning and struggling for a Liberation, and look upward for it; but whatever be the Issue, I look beyond it, and this weary, wretched Life, through which the Hand I have resigned to, I trust will lead me, in Paths of his own chusing; and so I may please him I am satisfied. This Word I would add, that as there has been nothing of my Choice in the Thing, so I undergo it, if it must be, as a Mortification, and that greater than a Cell and Hair Cloth; and whether any will believe me, or no, I am not careful. He adds, on another Occasion, "Your Love of Devotion and Holiness, I wholly agree with, and do really prefer the Study of it to all other Studies; yea, I desire humbly to bless his Name, and kiss his gracious Hand, that hath delivered me from the painful Pursuit of what we call Learning, and from the foolish Pleasure of venting any little of it that I have. I write it on my Books and wish it engraven on my Heart, *Οὐκ ἔγνω τοῦ εἰδέναι, &c.* I determined to know nothing, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Another of his Letters runs thus; "Some Days ago I received some Lines from you, and they were very welcome; for I know no better News can come from any Corner of the Earth, than of a Soul attempting to overcome the World and its own Flesh, and in any Degree prevailing, and resolving

though I have been exceeding vile, God has been exceeding gracious : How kind, how tender the Course of his Providence towards me ? How many, how great his Salvation ? Hell was my Due, and had been my Portion, had he not rescued me. O my God ! what shall I render ? In Heaven I shall praise thee ! I shall cast down my Crown before the Throne, saying, thou art worthy, not I. *Grace*, *Grace* will be my Song for ever there ; and if there be one Choir of Saints employed in Notes of greater Abasement than the rest, surely I shall take my Place among them. Oh ! may I arrive safe out of this

---

“ solving still onwards. All the Projects and Conquests in  
 “ the World are not to be named with it. Oh ! what a  
 “ Weariness is it to live amongst Men, and find so few Men ;  
 “ and amongst Christians, and find so few Christians ; so  
 “ much Talk, and so little Action ; Religion turned almost  
 “ to a tune and Air of Words ; and amidst all our pretty  
 “ Discourses pusillanimous and base, and so easily dragged in-  
 “ to the Mire : self and Flesh, Pride and Passion domineer-  
 “ ing, while we speak of being in Christ and cloathed with  
 “ him, and believe it, because we speak it so often, and so  
 “ confidently. Well, I know you are not willing to be thus  
 “ gull'd ; and having some Glances of the Beauty of Holiness,  
 “ aim no lower than Perfection, which in the End we hope  
 “ to attain : And in the mean while, the smallest Advances to-  
 “ wards it are more worth than Crowns and Scepters. I be-  
 “ lieve you often think on those Words of the blessed Cham-  
 “ pion *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* ix. 24, 25, &c. There is a noble Guest  
 “ with us. Oh ! let all our Business be to entertain him  
 “ honourably, and to live in celestial Love within ; that will  
 “ make all Things without very contemptible in our Eyes. I  
 “ should rave on, did I not stop myself, it falling out well  
 “ too for that, to be hard upon the Post Hour, ere I thought  
 “ of writing : Therefore good Night is all I add ; for what-  
 “ soever Hour it comes to your Hand, I believe you are as  
 “ sensible as I, that it is still Night ; but the Comfort is, it  
 “ is drawing towards that bright Morning that shall make a-  
 “ mends.

Your weary Fellow-Pilgrim, &c.

this Tribulation, and wash my Garments in the Blood of the Lamb. In the mean time make me humble, and take thy own wise Methods with me to keep me so: *I would live and die repenting*, only grant me thy Countenance and Favour: Thou hast said, to this Man thou wilt look, even to him *that is poor, and of a contrite Spirit*. Be it unto thy Servant according to thy Word.

CHRIST, *the* CHRISTIAN'S Master.

Matt. xxiii. 8. *One is your Master, even Christ.*

SUCH has been the Veneration some have paid their Teachers, that they have resign'd themselves absolutely to their Dictates, and followed them, even with a Slavery of Understanding. It was the Advice of the famous *Gamaliel*, that the ignorant should get themselves *Rabbi's*, that they might no longer doubt of any thing. In the School of *Pythagoras*, his Authority was absolute. *Ipsè dixit*, the Master hath said it, put an End to all farther Debates among his Disciples: They acquiesced in his Word as in an Oracle\*, and ask'd no farther Questions.

*Eighteenth Specimen.*

\* *Ælian var. Hist.*

Lib. IV.

c. 17.

How much more Reason has the Christian for this Subjection to his great Master, who has all those Qualifications that demand Reverence and Compliance? They were weak and fallible Men, and often blunder'd in the Dark: *He is a Teacher come from God*, John iii. 2. fully acquainted with the Father's Will, with the whole System of divine Doctrines, and with every thing that concerns our Salvation: He lay in the Bosom of the Father, and hath revealed him, John i. 18. John vii. 16.

is



is infallible in his Doctrine ; he received *not the Spirit by Measure*, John iii. 34. a faithful Messenger to the Church, Rev. i. 5. cloathed with the highest Authority, Mat. xxviii. 18, 19, 20. Mat. xvii. 5. John vi. 27.

O my Soul ! resign to *this Master* : Thou may'st safely receive his Dictates, and shalt not be misled by them ; and this thy Profession, as a Christian, obliges thee to : Thou wast in thy Baptism placed at his Feet, in the Condition of a Student and Learner in his Doctrines and Laws ; and upon thy Fidelity herein thy everlasting Welfare dependeth. *Baptism saveth ; not the putting away the Filth of the Flesh, but the Answer of a good Conscience towards God*, 1 Pet. iii. 21. or as some Criticks understand it, *the Interrogation, the Question of a good Conscience*.

† On Rom.  
x. 20.

“ It may, I suppose, more regularly be render'd,  
“ says Dr. † *Hammond*, the Question, or Address  
“ of a good Conscience to God ; when the true  
“ penitent Believer comes to him as to the Oracle,  
“ to inquire of him for the whole future Life,  
“ with a *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ? Or,*  
“ *Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal Life ?*  
“ applying himself to God for his Direction of  
“ all his future Actions, and that with a sincere,  
“ upright Conscience, resolving firmly to do what  
“ is there requir'd of him ; which Resolution of  
“ universal, sincere Obedience is that, which is  
“ here set opposite to the washing of the Flesh,  
“ and rinsing away the Sullage of it with Water ;  
“ which is but the Ceremony that signified that  
“ other, and was not to be thought to avail any,  
“ but those who performed what was signified by  
“ it ; any more than the Circumcision of a Jew  
“ without the inward Purity.” As I am baptiz'd  
into Christ, and in his Name, I have solemnly taken him for my Teacher, Master, and Lord, and  
put

put myself under his Government; and so far only as I am subject to him, and follow him, I am a Christian; Resign, O my Soul! to his Conduct without Reserve; an implicit Obedience here is thy Duty, thy Honour and Safety.

Resolve therefore to own him as thy *Master*: One is your Master, even Christ. Don't, under a Pretence of having no Master on Earth, neglect also the Master in Heaven; and so render thyself lawless, having no Rule but thy own Will, Humour or Lust.

Own him as thy *only Master*: *Hear ye him*, Matt. xvii. 5. him and him alone: none in Opposition to him, or in Neglect of him. The Office of other Teachers is to help me to understand the Doctrines of my Master, but not to dictate to me in his Stead: *He is the Author and Finisher of our Faith*, Heb. xii 2. His Authority must make and bound our Creeds; and therefore we are to look unto him, look off others unto him, as the Word may signify, *i. e.* when they could set up an Authority of their own.

Own him as thy Master *in all things*. Tho' thou may'st not fully understand some of his Doctrines, as how the Three Persons in the Blessed Trinity are distinguish'd, and how united; mayest not understand the full Mystery of the Person of Christ, the Manner, nor all the Ends of the Incarnation, the precise Nature of the Resurrection-Body, &c. *Ipse dixit*, he hath reveal'd these Things; and the Authority of the Teacher is sufficient to determine thy Faith. He hath said it, acquiesce therein without Cavilling; only don't pretend to be wise above what is written, nor to know and believe farther than he has revealed. Embrace all his Doctrines and Institutions, his Sacraments, and the Ministry he has appointed for the Service of his Church; as he  
has

has given *Pastors and Teachers for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ*, Eph. iv. 11, 12. These I would thankfully receive and be subject to, in Obedience to him, whilst they act in his Name, and pursue the great Ends of their Office; nor indeed can I truly call him Master, if I neglect any of his Appointments, or despise his Officers and Servants. Some, that seem to have no Business with the Church of Christ, with the Ordinances and Ministers of Christ, yet factiously and vainly pretend they are of Christ, 1 Cor. i. 12. Submit to him in all his Prescriptions and Laws. The Bible is the Christian's Institutes; the New Testament particularly, his Book of Lessons. Endeavour, O my Soul! to learn these, all of them, and more perfectly; and as they refer to Practice, and are designed to govern the Heart and Life, study and apply them for that Purpose; bring thy Thoughts, Affections, Desires, thy Words and Actions, civil and religious, to the Measure and Standard of the Gospel, submitting them to the Correction thereof, 2 Tim. iii. 16. A Text of Scripture, importing this or that Duty, or standing against this or that Practice, should be of the same Authority with a Christian, as a Statute of the Realm with a Lawyer, and be pleaded by Christians with one another, with like Authority.

O my God! grant me the true Christian Temper; influence my Mind to the Regard, Reverence, absolute Submission and Subjection that is due to my great Master; may his Word be Reason enough for my Faith and Practice; may his Will restrain, controul and govern me in all Things. I would deny myself, because *ipse dixit*, he hath enjoin'd it? crucify the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts; cut off the Right Hand, pluck out the Right Eye, because

because *ipse dixit*, he has made this my Duty, and declared it necessary to my Salvation: I would be humble, meek, lowly, live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World; love my Enemies, bless them that curse me, do Good to them that hate me, and pray for them which despitefully use me, because *ipse dixit*, this is the Doctrine and Law of my great Master. Oh! for a Heart more filled with Love and Loyalty to him: Help me, Lord, to sit at his Feet, receiving his Commands here, and waiting for his Salvation hereafter.

---

*Of resolute VIRTUE.*

1 Cor. xv. 58. *Be ye unmoveable in the Work of the Lord.*

THE great Care and Business of a Christian is to approve himself to God; and when this governs all his Actions, influences all his Designs, especially such as are of most Importance and directs all his Motions and Steps; when having fixed this as his End, he holds on in a steady Course with his Eye upon it, and does not warp or turn aside; he then acts like himself, becoming his Character and Profession. Thus it was with the Apostle, *Acts* xx. 24. *Acts* xxiv. 16. 2 Cor. v. 9. Lord, may this be my Attainment! let nothing divert me from my Duty; help me to hold on my Way through all Discouragements, and sacrifice every thing for a good Conscience.

In order to this it will be necessary, that I be well inform'd concerning my Duty. If I be ignorant or doubting; have not prov'd *what is that*



good, and acceptable, and perfect Will of God; have no clear Apprehensions of what is just, decent, and becoming me in every Instance; but am weak in the Faith, and a Child in Understanding, neither know Christian Duty, nor Christian Liberty; I shall be tofs'd too and fro with every Wind of Temptation, and must often stand still, look to the Motions of others, and so become a Captive to the Humours, Fancies, and Follies of Men.

I must be willing to undergo, not only the Censure of the unthinking, heedless Part of Mankind, but sometimes of the more serious, and even of my Friends; and it may be, must stand alone in the Way of my Duty, 2 Tim. iv. 16, 17. In which Case I would consider, that good Men are not my Rule; they are sometimes off their Guard, are unsteady, weak, passionate and selfish: 'Tis a poor Argument, this is the Opinion or Practice of such and such, and they are good Men. That may be true; and yet he that will always take Measures from them, will frequently plunge himself in the Dirt. When Peter was to be blamed, Paul thought it his Duty to withstand him to the Face; and had Barnabas done so too, he had not been carried away with his Dissimulation, Gal. ii. 11, 13. Help me, O my God, to set myself on as strong a Watch as possible here: If wise and good Men come to me with a cloven Foot, I would say, *Get thee behind me, Satan.*

I must be mortified to Applause and maintain low Thoughts, and a sort of a Contempt of the Opinions of others concerning me, *i. e.* in Comparison of the Testimony and Approbation of God and my own Conscience; must seek the Honour that cometh from God only, John v. 44. esteeming it a small thing to be judged of Man's Judgment. The Breath that endeavours to blast me, and that which extols

extols me, both will shortly be stopped; and as neither can affect my future State, they should not divert me from my present Duties. "He is not just that will not be just without Praise; but he is a righteous Man that does Justice, when to do so is made infamous; and he is a wise Man who is delighted with an *ill Name* that is *well gotten* Sen. Ep. 113. Oh! may I always consider, that every Man standeth or falleth to his own Master, and accordingly keep my Eye to my great Master's Hand, constantly saying, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*

I must get the World under Feet, be crucified to the World, and the World to me; looking down upon present Things with a generous Contempt, as scarce worthy of a serious, solicitous Thought; accounting no Interest considerable or important, but what respects another World and State. Oh! may it be thus with me: May I ever be immoveable in the Work of the Lord; steady and resolute in my Duty; till this World is in a great Measure depriv'd of the Power of tempting me; and I am prepared to suffer the Loss of all Things, and *count them but Dung, that I may win Christ.*

I must daily and often look up to Heaven for Help; not only invigorate and strengthen my Resolutions by proper Considerations and Reflections, but wait on God for the renewing of my Strength, by the Supply of his Spirit.

I must live within View of Eternity, look beyond this Moment and Inch of Time, and consider all the Affairs and Interests of it as little, low, and nothing, compared with an immense Eternity just ready to take place.

O my God! raise my Mind to this divine Pitch; as thou hast called me to thy Kingdom and Glory by Jesus Christ, make me *perfect, settle, establish, strengthen me*: Help me to add to my Faith Virtue, to act with a suitable Courage and Firmness in the Christian Profession. If Afflictions and Tribulations arise because of the Word and my Duty; if I should have Trial of cruel Mockings, moreover of Bonds and Imprisonments, and suffer the Scourge and Strife of Tongues; may I be able to say, *none of these Things move me, neither count I my Life dear, so I may finish my Course with Joy*; and say as the good Man did to the threatening Empress, *nil nisi Peccatum timeo*, I fear nothing but Sin: Fortify me both against the Smiles and Frowns of this World; if Sinners entice, may I not consent; if Enemies threaten, and Friends allure, may I not consent; but still look above all, beyond all, setting the Lord always before me, considering him as at my right Hand *observing me*; may I find him there *assisting, conducting and supporting me*.

### Of the Improvement of TIME.

Twentieth  
Specimen.

THE due Improvement of Time is a Matter of the utmost Consequence. I have many Arguments to press upon me Caution and Care in this great point of Religion. Time is short, uncertain, continually passing away, cannot be recalled; and which ought to have no small Weight with me, Time, or the Space allowed me in this World, is my Day of Grace and Trial: If I lose my Time, I lose Eternity; if I lose Part of it, even that is an eternal Loss, in the Consequences of it: A Day lost on Earth is an exceeding Loss, may

may I not say an Age lost in Heaven! As a Man soweth, so shall he reaps *he that soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly; and he that soweth plentifully, shall reap accordingly*: Now is my Seed Time, and Opportunity of Improvement for a future State; the more thereof I fill up my Time with Duty, and such Work as relates to another World, the fuller Harvest of Joy and Blessedness I shall have there Help me, O my God! to believe this, and to live for Eternity; so to redeem and husband my Time, that my Review of it at Death, and my Account of it after Death, may be with Joy, and not with Grief, for that will be unprofitable for me.

In order to this I would propose to myself the following Expedients and Helps. (1st,) I would endeavour to get my Mind possess'd and affected with a just Sense of the narrow Bounds and short Limits of my Life, and of that Time which may be properly reckon'd to Life: And here some such Computation as this may not be impertinent. I'll allow threescore and ten Years for the Life of Man, it may be more, or it may be less, but that's the common Period; if any survive it, they can scarce be said to live, but languish and die, sinking under the Burdens of decaying Nature: Out of this Sum I must make a Deduction for Infancy and Childhood, which can't be well less than sixteen Years: Few comparatively begin to live to any good Purpose before that Age, and most not till long after; and this will reduce the threescore and ten to fifty four. Again, one third of that must be allow'd for Sleep, in which all Action and Life, is, as it were, suspended; and this sinks it to thirty six: And of this I am afraid most People will be found to trifle away a fourth Part; that is, of the sixteen Hours which remain for Action or Life every Day, not above twelve of them are employed in the pro-



per Business of Life. With some I know it is better, but with the Generality not near so well; and this brings down the Account to twenty seven Years. This is all the Time that the aged Person of seventy can, strictly speaking, be supposed to live, according to a very modest Computation; though he should be one of them that began early to improve his Time, and has been constant in doing it: And how much of my seventy Years is already gone? How much of the twenty seven, according to the Deduction made, has been wasted by immoderate Sleep, unnecessary Visits, Diversions, Recreations, Sauntring and Idleness? And upon the whole, to what a narrow Scantling is Life reduced! Consider this, O my Soul! and be awakened; be up, and doing; trifle no more; work whilst it is Day. *Lord, teach me so to number my Days, that I may apply my Heart unto Wisdom.*

2dly, I would endeavour to offer up, and consecrate all my Time to God, and endeavour that it be sacred to him. By this Means I may extend the former Calculation, retrieve the Time that would otherwise be lost, and make all my *Duration* properly *Life*, whilst I eat and drink, sleep, trade, and do all *to the Glory of God*; managing all according to the Rules he hath set, aiming at him, and being solicitous to please him in all. Thus common Actions will receive a religious Stamp, and be a Sort of Worship to God. “† God hath not only  
 “permitted us to serve the Necessities of our Na-  
 “ture, but hath made them to become Parts of  
 “our Duty; so that if we, by directing these  
 “Actions to the Glory of God, intend them as  
 “Instruments to continue our Persons in his Ser-  
 “vice; he, by adopting them into Religion, may  
 “turn them into Grace, and accept our natural  
 “Actions as Actions of Religion. God is pleased

† Taylor's  
 Holy Liv-  
 ing, p. 3.

“ to esteem it for a Part of his Service, if we eat  
 “ or drink, so it be done temperately, and may  
 “ best preserve our Health, (and with this higher  
 “ and farther View, that our Health may enable  
 “ our Services towards him). And there is no one  
 “ Minute of our Lives, after we are come to the  
 “ Use of Reason, but we are, or may be doing  
 “ the Work of God, even then, when we most of  
 “ all serve ourselves.” Teach me, O Lord, this  
 divine Art! May my natural Actions and common  
 Business have *Holiness to thy Lord* upon them, and  
 my whole Time and Life be employed as a sacred  
 devoted Thing.

3dly, I resolve to watch against such Things as  
 would rob me of my Time; would take Care par-  
 ticularly, that I don't waste it in Bed by excessive,  
 unnecessary Sleep; would take Care of my first  
 Thoughts and first Minutes, that these be well em-  
 ployed; the Loss of these is often of bad Con-  
 sequence. I would guard against Idleness, living with-  
 out suitable Business; against Slothfulness in Bu-  
 siness; against immoderate Business and foreign Bu-  
 siness: I may lose my Time and Life, though I be  
 busy, if that Business be out of my proper Calling,  
 and the Way and Method of Service Providence  
 has appointed me; would guard against unprofit-  
 able Visits, Divisions, Pleasures, &c. spending no  
 more of my Time in these Things than the End of  
 them allows and requires.

4thly, I propose to divide the Time of every  
 Day, allotting a fit Proportion to the several Bu-  
 sinesses thereof. 'Twas the Practice of a pious Chri-  
 stian, to distribute his twenty four Hours into three  
 Parts, allowing one Part, or eight Hours for ear-  
 ing, drinking, sleeping, Company and Diversions;  
 another Part for the Work of his particular Cal-  
 ling in the World; and another third Part, or eight

Hours, for the special and immediate Service of God and Religion (*viz.*) Reading, Meditation, Prayer, &c. 'Tis said of *Grotius*, who spent his Days in an insatiable Pursuit of human Learning, that when he lay on his Death-Bed, he wish'd himself in the Stead of his devout Neighbour above referr'd to, and at the same time pass'd a Censure on his own Life; crying out, *Heu Vitam perdididi operose nihil agendo*; I have wasted my Life in laborious trifling. I would endeavour to act with Caution in this Matter; no one Business ought to ingross all my Time, nor encroach upon the just Demands of another: And though the Division I have mention'd may not suit me, nor would I be scrupulously nice in such Matters, yet some Care is due here; and the more exact and prudent I am in my Rules, and steady in the Pursuit of them, the better I shall improve my Time. So many Hours I would allow for Sleeping, Refreshment, Diversion and Company; so many for the Duties of my Calling; so many for Devotion; that is, such a Proportion to each, as upon a due Consideration of my Affairs and Circumstances I find convenient; and I would always resolve to leave some Time every Day for the Affairs of my Soul and Eternity, and not let the Shop encroach on the Closet, at least not keep me out of it.

5thly, I would endeavour, with the greatest Diligence and Care, to improve such Portions of my Time as are set apart for, and appropriated to the Work of Religion; as my daily Hours of Devotion, Fast or Thanksgiving Days, and every Lord's-Day, I would exclude the World wholly out of this Time, and make the best Use I can of it for another World, Lord, help me by thy Grace.

6thly, I would be careful not to lose my more loose and leisure Hours, in the Intervals of Business

nels or solemn Devotion ; and accordingly would  
 set myself to save as much of this Time as I can,  
 intermixing something of Religion, religious Dis-  
 course, or at least religious Thoughts with my  
 Company, Diversions, &c. “ Betwixt the more  
 “ stated Employments, and more important Oc-  
 “ currences of human Life, says the excellent Mr.  
 “ † Boyle, there usually happen to be interposed † Occasi-  
 “ certain Intervals of Time, which though they onal Re-  
 “ are wont to be neglected, as being singly, or flect. p. 9.  
 “ within the Compass of one Day, inconsider-  
 “ able, yet in a Man’s whole Life amount to no  
 “ contemptible Portion of it: Now these uncer-  
 “ tain Parentheses, if I may so call them, or In-  
 “ terludes that happen to come between the more  
 “ solemn Passages, whether Business or Recrea-  
 “ tions of Life, are wont to be lost by most  
 “ Men for want of a Value for them, and even  
 “ by good Men for want of Skill to preserve them:  
 “ But as though Grains of Sand and Ashes be a  
 “ Part but of a despicable Smallness, and very easy  
 “ and liable to be scatter’d and blown away, yet  
 “ the skilful Artificer, by a vehement Fire, brings  
 “ a Number of these to afford him that noble Sub-  
 “ stance Glass; by whose Help we may both see  
 “ ourselves and our Blemishes lively represented,  
 “ as in Looking-Glasses, and discern celestial Ob-  
 “ jects, as with Telescopes, and with the Sun  
 “ Beams kindle disposed Materials, as with burn-  
 “ ing Glasses: So when these little Fragments or  
 “ Parcels of Time, which, if not carefully looked  
 “ to, would be dissipated and lost, come to be ma-  
 “ naged by a skilful Christian, and to be impro-  
 “ ved by the Celestial Fire of Devotion, they may  
 “ be so order’d as to afford us both Looking-Glas-  
 “ ses to dress our Souls by, and Perspectives to  
 “ discover heavenly Wonders and Incentives to in-  
 “ flame



“ flame our Hearts with Charity and Zeal: And  
 “ since Goldsmiths and Refiners are wont all the  
 “ Year long carefully to save the very Sweepings  
 “ of their Shops, because they may contain in them  
 “ some Filings or Dust of those richer Metals,  
 “ Gold and Silver; I see not why a Christian may  
 “ not be as careful not to lose the Fragments, and  
 “ lesser Intervals of a Thing, incomparably more  
 “ precious than any Metal, *Time*; especially when  
 “ the Improvement of them may not only redeem  
 “ so many Portions of our Life, but turn them  
 “ to pious Uses, and particularly to the great Ad-  
 “ vantage of Devotion” O my Soul! study this  
 Frugality and good Husbandry. Time is short, do  
 not throw any of it away; *walk circumspectly, not  
 as Fools, but as wise, redeeming the Time.* Fix thy  
 Rules; quicken thy self to the Observation of them  
 by a frequent and near View of Eternity; often  
 call thyself to an Account for thy Time; enquire  
 how it passes, what Loss thou sustaineest therein, and  
 by what Means; and contrive in the best Manner  
 thou canst, how to save it and improve it. Lord,  
 be my Guide and Instructor herein; make me wise,  
 to consider my latter End, and that *on this Moment  
 of Time my Eternity depends.*

---

*Of the CHRISTIAN Ambition.*

*Twenty  
 first Speci-  
 men.*

**E**VERY Man has something of Ambition, which  
 is an intense Desire of Good, of farther and  
 greater Good; of rising and being in some Re-  
 spect or other better, more comfortable, more hap-  
 py. And this is very different in different Sorts  
 of Persons, according to the different Sense they  
 have of Things desirable and excellent, and their  
 different

different Notions of Happiness. 'Tis said of *Luther*, that *he knew no Ambition but what concerned the Service of God*: Most Men's Ambition is directed quite another Way, and has nothing of God for the Object; but how to raise or increase an Estate; to aggrandize themselves and Families; get Preferments, Titles, Honours, and Reputation amongst Men, enrich Posterity, &c. for which Purpose they form Project, lay Schemes, and are unwearied in the Pursuit of them. We often see them sell their Children's Souls for a little Grandeur, Money, Settlements, and such like Advantages in the World: Instances of this Kind are so common, that as most Men seem to aim at nothing else, so they are ready to think none do; as if the Lusts of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life, was really all there was in the World, and all we have to mind in it. Thus blind and besotted are unthinking Creatures; they are pursuing Shadows and Vanity, and according to their Success applaud themselves, and are applauded by others: *Men will praise thee when thou dost well to thyself*, Psal. xlix. 18.

But the Christian Ambition is of another Kind; he has more noble divine Views, has chosen another Sort of Happiness, and is breathing after higher, and more excellent Things. As to *the World*, he is, in some Measure, *crucified* to it, and it to him, Gal. vi. 14. And 'tis not possible he should be fond of such a *Caput mortuum*, a blasted, dead Thing, as the World is, if it be really *crucified* to him. He is *transformed by the renewing of his Mind*, Rom. xii. 2. his *Affections* are *set on Things above*, Colos. iii. 2. and about these his Ambition is employed. In general, 'tis his Ambition to please God, and be accepted of him: This is the *one Thing* his Soul desires, and that he's resolved to seek after, all the Days

Days of his Life; in Comparison of which, all other Things are Cyphers, Vanity, and nothing; Particularly he is ambitious,

That he may obtain a more compleat Conquest over his sinful Passions, irregular Desires and Motions; that he may be able to crucify the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts, cleansing himself from all Filthiness both of the Flesh and of the Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the Fear of God; that all gross, fleshly Desires, all the Deeds of the Body may be mortified; that Pride, Envy, Malice and such like Filthiness of the Spirit may be wholly rooted out of his Nature; all lofty Imaginations cast down, and every Thought brought into Subjection to the Obedience of Christ.

That he may have a divine Ability for, and be ready to every good Work; may be strengthened by the Spirit, *with Might in the inward Man*; have a Furniture and Disposition of Mind for all the Duties and Services of Religion; for the Duties of his special Office, and particular Relations; for Works of Piety and Charity, as Occasion requires. In a Word, that he may be fitted to do or suffer, to converse with God and Man, according to the Laws and Rules of his sacred Profession.

That he may always keep Possession of himself, preserve a Serenity, Composure and Calmness within, under any Events; not be elated by Prosperity, or depress'd by Adversity; neither be ruffled by a frowning, or tickled by a smiling World; but pass through every State of Things with Indifferency, bearing either Reproach or Applause with an undisturbed Mind; with a Sense of the divine Hand in every Thing, and the divine Eye upon him, constantly observing his Motions and Frame. Christ was the same when the Multitude hailed him, and when they reviled him, in the  
midst

midst of their *Hofanna's* and Detractions ! Glorious Attainment ! Could the Christian come up to it, he would triumph therein more than *Alexander* in all his Spoils.

That he may live in a Constant Acknowledgment of God and Submission to him in all his Providences ; not only bearing, but adoring his Hand in his Dispensations ; maintaining a holy Complacency or well Pleasedness therein. “ He would  
 “ consider as one \* expresses it, that God is \* *Taylor's*  
 “ the Master of the Senses, that we must not *Holy Liv-*  
 “ chuse which Part we shall act ; it concerns us *ing, p. 105.*  
 “ only to be careful, that we do it well ; always  
 “ saying, *If † this please God, let it be as it is :* And † *Εἰ τὸ*  
 “ we who pray that God's Will may be done on *τῷ Θεῷ*  
 “ Earth, as it is in Heaven, must remember that *φιλῶν,*  
 “ the Angels do whatsoever is commanded them, *τὸ*  
 “ and go wherever they are sent, and refuse no *γενέσθω.*  
 “ Circumstances : And if their Employment be  
 “ crossed by a higher Decree, they sit down in  
 “ Peace, and rejoyce in the Event ; as when the  
 “ Angel of *Judea* could not prevail in Behalf of  
 “ the People committed to his Charge, because *Dan. x. 13.*  
 “ the Angel of *Persia* opposed it ; he only told the  
 “ Story at the command of God, and was as con-  
 “ tent, and worshipped with as great an Exta-  
 “ sy in his Proportion, as the prevailing Spirit.  
 “ Thus should the Christian do, if he keep the  
 “ Station wherein God hath placed him ; he'll ne-  
 “ ver long for Things without, but sit at home  
 “ feasting upon the divine Providence.” This is  
 the Mark the Christian's Ambition levels at, that  
 his Will may in every Thing go along with the  
 divine Will, when clearly manifested ; not only sub-  
 mitting to it, in this or that Providence, as what  
*must* be ; but resting in it, and approving it, as  
 what *is fit to be, and is best :* So that he may al-  
 most



most say as *Luther*, *Fiat Voluntas mea, mea quia tua*; let my Will be done, as being wholly referr'd to, and included in thine.

That he may have his Love enlarged and inflamed, towards God and towards Men; a more extensive, catholick, divine Charity; a Heart to love Enemies, to overlook and forgive Injuries, and overcome Evil with Good.

That he may preserve a devout Frame, and keep the Fire of the Altar always in; be glad when he is called to go to the House of God, and find an Heart for Worship, publick or secret, and that as often as the time of it returns.

That he may taste the Pleasures, and partake of the Refreshments of Worship; neither want the serious, solemn Frame, nor miss the divine Presence, but have lively Intercourse with God therein; see his Power and Glory in his Sanctuary, be-satisfied with the Fatness of his House, and drink of the Rivers of his Pleasure.

That his Children and Household after him (if he be a Parent) may keep the Way of the Lord, be found walking in the Truth, that he may see Christ formed in them; see them partaking of the high Honour and Dignity of being genuine and useful Members of the Christian Church. Oh! how doth he travail in Birth for this Purpose? beseeching the Lord Night and Day with Tears: And how would he triumph in it, could he see the Travail of his Soul in this Respect?

These, and the like, are the Objects of the Christian's Ambition; whilst the Men of this World are intent upon worldly Good, upon rising higher, getting more; his Ambition has a nobler Game, and different Reference, *viz.* that he may govern his Spirit, overcome his Corruption, discharge his Duties, guard his Frame, and enjoy his God! If  
he

he can succeed in these Things, all is well, nothing can then come amiss to him; let the World revile and reproach, Friends forsake him, and Relations grieve him; if Heaven smile, and God lift up the Light of his Countenance upon him, this puts Gladness into his Heart, and gives him a Triumph over all Adversity.

Thus 'tis with Christians of Eminency, of higher Stature and Attainment in Religion. Tho' as long as they are in the World, the Affairs of it will demand some of their Attention, and they can't wholly over-look the Cravings of the bodily Appetites, nor must they neglect the Offices of Life; yet their chief Concern is about the other World, and their Way to it. The Interests of that have their most solicitous, most delightful Thoughts; and with some it may be the greatest Number of their Thoughts: Nay even whilst they seem busy among inferiour Services here below, their Mind is often aspiring, looking above them, and beyond them. 'Tis a divine Passage of the Philosopher, and yet, no doubt verified in some: "As the Rays of the Sun, says he, touch the Earth, and yet are there, from whence they are darted, so a great and devout Mind is familiarly conversant here below, *sed hæret inter superos*, 'tis fix'd on God, and the Inhabitants of another World;" from whence he lets fall a Look upon these lower Things, not without Contempt of them, they seem so little to him.

O my God! regulate my Affections, and direct them to their proper Objects; if my Soul may but prosper and be in Health, and my religious Affairs succeed well, as to other Things, more Estate, Honour, Reputation, outward Comforts, &c. I have nothing to say; my Happiness dependeth not upon them: They may be either good or bad, as they are used, as they fit me, or as I need them,  
or

Or can bear them ; and therefore I leave them in a wiser Hand than my own, either to give or deny, as he shall chuse for me : What thou wilt, and as thou wilt, only forsake me not ; grant me thy Presence and Favour, and 'tis enough. *Deus meus & omnia : Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none on Earth I desire besides thee ?*

### Of the Religious Education of CHILDREN.

Twenty Second Specimen.

**F**ATAL are the Mistakes Men run into in this great and momentous Affair, the Education of their Children. The common Methods of Education don't seem to have any thing of God and Religion in them. O my Soul ! be upon thy Guard here. *I know Abraham, says God, that he will command his Children and Household after him, and they shall keep the Way of the Lord, Gen. xviii. 19.* Let this be thy solicitous Care, and constant, faithful Endeavour. 'Tis true, I cannot give them Grace, and secure their Religion ; but as God has appointed me my Duty, and laid his Commands upon me, he has encouraged my Expectation of Success. A Religious Education, if it be truly and throughout such, and don't fail in any necessary Branches of it, is often, and it may be ordinarily followed with a Blessing, and made effectual : *Train up a Child in the Way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it, Prov. xxii. 5.* Lord, help me to attend my Duty and thy Prescriptions, and leave the Event in thy Hand. In order to it I would propose to myself the following Rules.

1st, I purpose and resolve to be serious and solemn in devoting my Children to God in Baptism.  
A great



A great many seem to make Baptism only a proper Time of giving Names to their Children, or a Season of Feasting and Merriment, or at least matter of Form and Compliance with an establish'd Custom, leaving out what is most essential to the Ordinance, the concern they have with God therein. When Parents offer their Children to Baptism, they are solemnizing a Family Covenant as it were; that is, the common Christian Covenant, as made with them and their Family, owning their Relation to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; endeavouring to insert, as I may say, the Name of this or that Child into God's Covenant, and to continue the high Privilege and Honour of such a Relation in their Family. And how important a Thing is this? And with how much Seriousness should we go about it? O my Soul! remember thy Faults this Day; be humbled for past Remissness and Neglects, and be more serious and devote in thy Future Transaction of this Kind. I knew a Family, all the Branches of which seem'd to have an early and a more than common Sense of Religion, for which a judicious and grave Man gave this Reason; that next to the special Favour and Grace of God, he thought it owing to the religious Solemnity and Seriousness, with which the Head of the Family devoted his Children to God in Baptism.

2dly, I purpose and resolve to be early and constant in the proper Methods of Instruction; particularly to inculcate and labour to possess them with a Conviction and Sense of the Worth and Dignity of the Soul, of the Certainty of a future State of Immortality, of the Importance of eternal Things, and set my self all I can to bring this World into a just Neglect and Contempt with them; to instill a high Veneration for the holy Scriptures, recommending



mending and making the Bible their chief Study and Delight, if it may be. This has been the Way of good People in all Ages. *Timothy from a Child knew the holy Scripture*, 2 Tim. iii. 15. The Jews were commanded *diligently to teach* the Words of the Law to their Children, *Deut. vi. 6.* and how defective soever they were in other Things, their Zeal in this particular was very commendable. *Josephus* tells us, their Children were train'd up in the Knowledge of the Law from their very Infancy, and were so expert therein, that *they knew every Thing as perfectly as their own Names.* Nor were the Primitive Christians less careful in this respect: The Bible, especially the New Testament, was their Institutes, the Grammar of their Religion, in which their Catechumens and Children were grounded. *St. Jerome*, in one of his Epistles, giving Directions for the Education of a young Lady of a noble Christian Family, advises, "That as soon as she was capable she should learn the *Psalms*, *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*; next be taught the four Gospels, and have them always in her Hand; then get the *Acts* and *Epistles* by Heart, and then pass to the reading of the Prophets." How little of this is there in the present Discipline of most Families? Musick, Dancing, Play-Books, with a Collection of Novels, light Poetry, &c. these are looked upon as the great Accomplishments of young Persons, and mainly attended to in their Education; which, no doubt, is one great Cause of that Degeneracy we so much complain of in the Profession of the Christian Religion. Consider, O my Soul! that in Baptism thou enterest thy Children into the School of Christ, and layest thyself under Obligations to teach them his Doctrine: Endeavour to do this with Constancy and Care; put *his Book* into their Hands, and help them to take out

out of it the great and important Lessons it contains.

3dly, I purpose and resolve to watch and guard their Manners, and apply myself in all the Methods I can, to cure the Maladies and Distempers of their Minds. I would constantly recommend to them all social and divine Virtues, Love to God and Man, in all the Branches of it, Sobriety, Modesty, Humility, the Government of their Passions and Appetites; Diffidence of themselves, Esteem and Reverence of Superiors; especially their Parents, Ministers and Instructors; Justice, Truth, and Charity in their Words; and when any Symptoms of evil, any immoral, vicious Inclinations begin to appear, I would set myself, with great Sollicitude, to suppress them and root them out; to which Purpose I would carefully watch over them, and observe every thing of this Kind: I would note down their more remarkable Miscarriages from time to time, put *them* upon doing the like, and not only give suitable Admonitions and Cautions, but direct to such Texts of Scripture, where they may see themselves corrected and censured. And to enforce all, I would add the Sanction of mine Authority, *commanding* my Children and Household after me to keep the Way of the Lord; encouraging them by proper Rewards in well-doing, and restraining them by Threats and Punishments from the contrary, *Prov. xix. 18. Prov. 13. 24.*

4thly, I purpose and resolve at fit Times to address myself to them in a more solemn Manner, treating with them about the Affairs of their Souls; warning them of the Danger of such and such Neglects, such and such Practices and Pursuits; recommending to them Religion from all suitable Topicks; and particularly pressing them to a personal

covenanting with God, especially at the Lord's Table ; for which Purpose I would endeavour to afford them all proper Helps.

5thly, I purpose and resolve to dispose of them in the World, to chuse their Callings, Employments and Masters ; their Relations, Husbands, and Wives, so far as I can, and the whole State of their Affairs, *with an intire Reference and Subserviency to the great Ends of Religion.* Oh ! that I may not, as is too commonly the Case, by Carelessness and Treachery in these Instances, destroy what I have been building ; and after I have devoted my Children to God, and engaged to bring them up according to the Rules and Laws of the Christian Discipline, sacrifice them to *Mammon*, and barter away their Souls for a little present Advantage. What is this but to imitate those wretched Idolaters the *Prophet* speaks of, *Jer. xxxii. 35.* who *built high Places to Baal, to cause their Sons and their Daughters to pass through the Fire unto Molech.* Their Souls, if not their Bodies, hereby become a Victim. Oh ! may I never be guilty of this Perfidiousness. I profess to take God as my Covenant God ; I have given up my Children to him in Covenant ; I lie to him, and am an Hypocrite, unless I chuse him as my Portion and theirs esteeming his Loving-Kindness better than Life.

6thly, I purpose, and shall endeavour to enforce all my Instructions by my Example, and not to run down in Practice what I recommend by Precept ; would take Care whilst I inculcate to them the Necessity of Religion, and of minding another World, preferring the Interests of it to this World, not to neglect it myself, and thereby destroy the Efficacy of my own Doctrine ; would take Care, while I talk to them of Moderation, Humility, Self-denial, &c. not to live in the contrary Vices myself,



self, and indulge myself in Practices I am constantly representing to them the Danger of, If, while I talk to them of governing their Passions, I give a loose to my own; and against reviling and backbiting others, I daily take the Liberty of doing so before them; if while I talk to them of the Duties of Retirement, of Diligence and Constancy therein, I manifest I have no Regard to these Things myself; often read grave Lectures of Mortification and Contempt of the World, and yet discover by my Conduct, both of myself and them, that I have nothing so much at Heart; this can have no other Tendency but to undermine all my Instructions, and make the young Pupil despise them as Words in Course, and a sort of Cant; or at least make him like myself, *an Hypocrite, and vain Pretender to Religion*. Dread, O my Soul! this trifling; if Religion be necessary and good for others, 'tis good for thee; nor wilt thou ever teach to Purpose, whilst an ill Conscience and an ill Example stare thee in the Face. Parents should be able to say to their Children, as the *Apostle* doth to the *Thessalonians*, *Ye are Witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly, and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you*, 1 Theff. ii. 10. *Those Things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard and seen in me do, and the God of Peace shall be with you*, Phil. iv. 9.

7thly, I purpose and resolve to look up to God, in frequent, fervent Prayer, for his Instruction, to accompany and crown mine. This must be my daily Work; and I would often set some Time apart for more solemn Intercession and Supplication in behalf of my Children; laying before him, and enlarging upon their several Cases, Necessities and Wants, and recommending them particularly to God, and begging he would direct me in my Methods of Conduct towards them; and especially



when I have any close Reproof, or Admonition to give them, that he would assist me in that Application, and bless it; prepare their Hearts to receive it, make it suitable and effectual. The more we depend on God in this, and all the great Affairs of Religion, the more Success we are like to have: He has often prosper'd, and own'd such a Dependence. *Ambrose* told *Monica*, the Mother of *Austin*, who had been so importunate for his Conversion, that *a Son of so many Prayers could not miscarry*: Not that Prayer, though as fervent as *Monica's*, is always successful; but 'tis often so; often a Means of enriching and blessing a Family, and sometimes has been answer'd in very glorious Fruits, and prov'd the best Inheritance to their Children, after the pious Supplicants have been laid in the Dust.

Help me, O my God! with all suitable Zeal and Patience, to attend my Duty in this Particular of it; may I walk within my House with a perfect Heart; not only instructing, but exhorting and charging *as a Father his Children, that they walk worthy of God*, 1 Theff. ii. 11, 12. Whilst so many are seeking great Things for themselves, and theirs in this World, I would seek great Things of a more excellent and durable Nature; whilst they project how to make a *Man* of this or that Child, as they express it, I would be solicitous to make every one of mine a Christian, and constantly pursue such Measures as have the most direct Tendency to that Purpose. Lord, grant me the Desire and Travail of my Soul herein, and I have nothing greater, nothing farther to ask!

## Of glorifying God.

'TIS agreed, I thing, among Christians, what-<sup>Twenty</sup>  
 ever End God may be said to have in ma-<sup>Thrd</sup>  
 king the World, and in all his Works, that the <sup>Specimen.</sup>  
 great and ultimate End of Man, and which he is  
 to propose to himself as his End, is God himself,  
 his Honour and Glory. This Religion teacheth  
 us: *Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we*  
*are to do all to the Glory of God,* 1 Cor. x. 31. But  
 though this be allowed to be our End, and what  
 we often talk of as such, it may be few, compara-  
 tively, have any distinct and just Notion of the  
 Thing, *what it is to glorify God.* 'Tis not certain-  
 ly to add to his Glory, to make him glorious, or  
 more glorious than he is; this no Creatures, neither  
 Men nor Angels can do: But 'tis, in short, *to pre-*  
*serve and express a Sense of his Excellency.* We glo-  
 rify God, when in our whole Conduct and Beha-  
 viour we shew an Esteem of him, and Regard to  
 him, suitable to the Dignity of his Nature;  
 when we have those inward Affections, and disco-  
 ver them upon all Occasions, that are due to a Be-  
 ing of such Excellencies, and answer the several  
 Perfections we acknowledge in him: For Instance,

We glorify his Power when we own and cele-  
 brate it in all the Displays thereof, in his Works,  
 both of Creation and Providence; when we rely  
 on him for the Performance of all he has promised,  
 being persuaded he *can do every Thing, and that no*  
*Thought can be withholden from him,* Job lxii. 2.  
 Thus Abraham glorified the divine Power, trust-  
 ing in it through such Difficulties as a weak Faith  
 could not have surmounted: He *believed in Hope*  
*against Hope; consider'd not his own Body, now dead,*

when he was about 100 Years old, nor yet the Deadness of Sarah's Womb. He stagger'd not at the Promise through Unbelief, but was strong in Faith, giving Glory to God, Rom. 4. 18, 19, 20. The three Jewish Worthies glorified the divine Power, when they set it against the Threats of the haughty Monarch, and in Consideration of it despised all his Terrors. *The God whom we serve, say they, is able to deliver us out of thy Hand*, Dan. viii. 17. The Christian glorifieth it by the like Trust, in all Dangers and Difficulties; particularly in his confident Hope of a Resurrection by the Power of God, Matt. 22. 29. Farther, we glorify his Power, when we fear him more than all other Beings, Matt. x. 28. When we reverence him as the great Sovereign and supream Lord of all, Matt. vi. 13, and in a Word, when we expect all Performances of Power from him, and slight such Objections as would discourage our Faith and Trust.

We glorify his Wisdom, when we take Notice of the Manifestations of it in all his Ways; when we maintain a Veneration suitable to so great an Excellency; when we implicitly acquiesce in his Providences, even though we understand not the Meaning and Design of them; believing that all God does is well done; that there can be no Error in his Administration; when accordingly we wait for, and resign to his Conduct in all Things,

We glorify his Mercy when we make that our Refuge under a Sense of Guilt, and believe it sufficient to pardon the greatest Transgressions; and will do it, in the Way, and according to the Plan and Scheme of the Gospel Covenant, Psal. li. 1.

We glorify his Omniscience and Immanesity, when we set him always before us, and at our right Hand; believe he seeth in secret; and accordingly are as busy in that part of Religion, which

is

is withdrawn from the View of Men, and as devout in it, as if all was transacted upon the open Theatre of the World, *Matt. vi. 6.* When a Sense of his Eye upon us, and his certain Knowledge of the inward Motions, Thoughts and Intentions of the Heart, restrain from those Sins that have the Temptation of Privacy; when we dare not dissemble and act with Disguise, because God knows it; dare not lie or conceal the Truth when called to utter it, because, tho' we may pass undiscover'd amongst Men, yet we consider that all Things are naked and open to his Eyes, *My Son, says Joshua to Achan, confess and give Glory to the God of Israel, and tell me what thou hast done, Josh. vii. 19.* When we reverence his Presence, at all Times speaking, thinking and acting in his Fear.

We glorify his Holiness and Majesty, when we behave ourselves with suitable Lowliness and Self-Abasement before him, *Gen. xviii. 27.* and like the Seraphim cover our Faces when we behold his, *Isai. vi. 2.* When a Sense of his infinite Purity and Greatness deeply humbles us, lays us in the Dust as vile and nothing.

We glorify him in his Providences, when we reverence every Dispensation; eye his Hand, own his Sovereignty, Justice, Wisdom, Holiness, &c. therein; dutifully submit to his Will, and when, whatsoever he appoints and doth, we fall at his Foot and do Obedience.

We glorify him in his Word and Laws, when we esteem them according to their Excellency, as holy, wise, just and good; make them our Study, Meditation, and Delight, our Monitors and Rule; subjecting ourselves to the Authority of God therein, and that at all Times, and in all Things.

In short, we glorify him *as God*, as the most excellent Being, when our greatest Ambition, and  
constant



constant Endeavour is to love him, serve him, obey him, and, in our Measure, to be like him; when we are solicitous to obtain his Favour, esteeming his *loving Kindness better than Life*; are more concerned to please him, and recommend ourselves to him, than about any other Interest in the World; when we covet his Presence. and triumph in it, and are willing not only to leave this World, but to go through Death, any Sort of Death, for the Joys of his Presence.

This is to glorify God: We glorify him *inwardly*, when we have that esteem and Reverence of God, Fear, Trust, Love, &c. that the Perfections and Excellencies of his Nature require: And we glorify him *outwardly*, and give others Occasion to glorify him, when we shew our inward Esteem, Reverence, Devotion, &c. in a Course of Action; speaking honourably of God upon all Occasions; publicly worshipping him, and with all becoming Devotion; expressing a Zeal for his Name and Honour; being ready to vindicate it at all times, as we are able; and in a Word, acting in every Instance as those who understand the Perfection of their Rule, the Greatness and Excellency of their Master, and *as seeing him that is invisible*: Hereby our *Light shines before Men*, and we give them Occasion (seeing our good Works, with what *Decorum* and Decency, with what Reverence of God, &c. we act) to *glorify our Father that is in Heaven*.

O my Soul! let this be thy Care, thy Study and thy Ambition; to honour God in thy Thoughts, Words and Actions; to discover a due Sense of his infinite Excellencies, and to make a just Representation of him to the World. Give him the Glory of every Attribute, and constantly act under the Influence of it; let his Power deter thee from Sin,  
encourage

encourage thee to thy Duty in the midst of all Difficulties and Dangers: *Fear him that can kill, not the Body only*; let a Sense of his Perfections draw out all suitable Graces; a Sense of his constant Presence compose thee to Gravity and Decency of Behaviour: Endeavour thus to glorify God, make it the general End of thy Life, and the End of thy particular Actions: *Whether thou eatest or drinkest, or whatever thou doest, do all to the Glory of God*: Give him the Glory of all he has done for the World, for the Church, for thyself: Acknowledge him in every Thing, in thy Enjoyments, Comforts, Attainments, and Works; let it be engraven on thy Hears. *By the Grace of God I am what I am*. This I have done by the good Hand of my God upon me; it was his Wisdom that directed me, his Grace that supplied me, his Strength that carried me thro' the Service. When I can say this with a full Conviction of my Dependence on God's Help, and with a due Sense of his Goodness therein, I understand the *Gloria Deo* (Glory to God) which is too often paid him in a Compliment, and there is something more than Form in my Ascription. O my Soul! endeavour to fix thy Attention right; make God thy all; his Glory thy constant Aim: Thou needest not exclude thy own Interest, nor art thou required to do so: that's always in Connexion with God's Glory: He that truly honours God, will effectually serve his own Interest and Comfort, and secure his Salvation. Lord, assist me in the Choice of my End, and in the Pursuit thereof; fill my Mind with a Sense of thy Excellencies; and may I, in all my Converse with thyself and with my Fellow-Creatures, act as under thy Eye and Influence, walking worthy, and shewing forth the Virtues of him that has called me; of whom, thro' whom, to whom are all Things, *to whom be Glory for ever and ever.* And

And thus I have given some special Examples for the Assistance of intelligent and devout Christians. I have drawn them out to a greater Length than I designed. It may be the Subjects I have chosen will be less acceptable to some, and may be thought not so proper for Meditation; but my Intention is to lay down the Method and Manner of Meditation; to which Purpose any Subjects may be suitable: And indeed I have made Choice of these, not only because I look upon them of Importance in the Christian Life; but because I apprehend them growing out of Fashion, and almost obsolete among us. The Strain of modern Writings in Divinity, and modern Sermons, seems to run another Way; and being myself convinc'd that there is a Reality in these Things, and that many of them are the Truths by which Souls chiefly live and prosper, and in which, particularly, Devotion is eminently concern'd; I found it no Difficulty to risque my Reputation, and expose myself to the Censure of some Criticks, rather than neglect any Part of the Service, to serious Persons, I propos'd in this Essay. I shall hasten through what remains on the Head of Meditation, and only touch upon a few Subjects for occasional Meditation, in a very transient Way, with greater Negligence of Stile and Method, and thereby make the Specimen fitter for Imitation,

## SECT.

## SECT. X.

## Some Specimens of Occasional Meditation.

---

*On the Reverence due in God's Worship.*

*Saturday Night, 7 a-Clock.*

I Am by the good Hand of my God upon me brought near the Close of another Week, and have a near Prospect of another Sabbath. Among the Duties that lie before me the ensuing Day, those that concern publick Worship, are not the least considerable. It was, I presume, one great end, if not the chief end of God, in the Institution of a Sabbath, or Day of sacred Rest, and for which it is continued in the Church, that Men might meet together, openly acknowledge God, pay homage to him, and converse with him in the Solemnities of Worship; and upon the Discharge of his Duty in a right manner, I reckon the Sanctification of the Sabbath, and the Comfort of it very much dependeth.

Among other Defects with reference hereto, which I have to accuse my self of, one is Want of due Reverence in the House and Worship of God. I have not enough consider'd, that when I come into the House of God, the Place of publick Worship, I am in his more special, immediate, solemn Presence; and consequently that a more than common Reverence is due from me. Oh my God! forgive past Forgetfulness and Neglects,  
and



and help me in my future Conduct. Thou art every where present, filling Heaven and Earth ; but here I may expect a more special Presence. Oh ! that I had a greater Sense of it ; Help me here to set thee always before me ; and when I enter into thy Courts, to behave my self as one under deep Impressions of thy Eye and Presence, saying as the devout Patriarch, *How dreadful (or venerable) is this Place ! this is none other but the House of God, and this is the Gate of Heaven*, Gen. xxviii. 17.

It was one of the Precepts and Rules God gave his ancient People, the Jews, that they should reverence his Sanctuary, Lev. xix. 30. There was, no doubt, a peculiar Holiness in that Place, and a peculiar Reverence due to it, founded on Reasons peculiar to that Dispensation : Its very Name imports Holiness and Sanctity. It was a divine Structure, a Building of God. He drew the Model of it, *Exod. xxvi. 30*. It had a solemn Consecration, by divine Appointment, *Exod. xlix. 10*. It was distinguish'd and honour'd by the *Shechinah*, the sensible glorious Presence of God, *Exod. xxv. 8*. And as God took Possession of it, and sanctified it by his extraordinary Presence, so from thence he manifested himself to his People, and often in a peculiar sensible Manner, *Exod. xxv. 22. xxxiv. 35. Levit. i. 1*. These Things gave a Glory to that Place of Worship, made it a Sanctuary, and call'd for special Reverence : Accordingly sundry Laws and Rules were prescrib'd them, relating to that Reverence, which I shall not at present meddle with.

'Tis certain there is now under the Gospel no such Sanctuary, or holy Place. It was the *Shechinah* eminently that distinguish'd that Place heretofore, and render'd it holy. Thus *Sinai* and *Sion* were call'd holy, because the *Shechinah* or Glory of the  
the

the Lord appear'd in them in so illustrious a manner; and hence the Mount of Transfiguration is call'd the *holy Mount*, 2 *Pet.* i. 18. because of the excellent Glory there manifested, v. 17. But this Holiness was purely *relative*, owing to the hollowing, sanctifying, extraordinary Presence of God; and ceas'd whenever that was withdrawn. *Shiloh* was no longer holy, when the Ark and Tabernacle and *Shechinah* were remov'd from it. *Jerusalem* was once the holy City, but now is not so, because God has forsaken it. 'Tis observable that when the *Shechinah* had at any time remov'd from the *Sanctuary*, and left the most holy Place, as it often did, particularly to direct the Children of *Israel* in their Marches, it was no longer esteem'd *most holy*; and therefore not only *Aaron*, but his Sons, the common Priests, might come into it, *Numb.* iv. 5. So that I think it certain there can remain with us no such Thing, properly speaking, as a *Sanctuary* or holy Place, unless we can prove a *Shechinah* in them. We may consecrate them by Forms and Rites of Religion, and invoke the divine Presence; may call them holy, but can never make them holy in the same Sense as the Jewish Tabernacle and Temple were holy, unless by some Means or other, we can introduce a sensible Display of the Divinity into them: And therefore we find Places of Worship under the Gospel were chosen without Distinction, and without any Presence of Holiness. So our *Saviour* told us it should be, *John* iv. 20, 21, 23. And so we find it was: *Christ* preach'd in Synagogues, *Mat.* xiii. 54. *Mark* vi. 2. On a Mountain, *Mat.* v. 1. By the Sea-side, *Mark* iv. 1. In a Ship, *Mat.* xiii. 2. In an House, *Mark.* ii. 1. 2. And thus did the Apostles, *Acts* i. 13. ii. 46. v. 42. xviii. 7. 11. xviii. 30, 31. There was *but one* particular Place which heretofore  
God

God chose to put his Name in, and to which their Sacrifices and Offerings were to be brought; but under the Gospel Incense is to be offer'd in every Place, Mal. i. 11.

But though Places of Worship are not now holy, as under the Jewish Dispensation the Tabernacle and Temple were, yet undoubtedly there is a Reverence due to them, or at least in them. They may still be call'd *the House of God*, and ought to be esteem'd the Places of his special Presence. The Jewish Sanctuary was frequently term'd the *Tabernacle of the Congregation*, or Meeting; not from the People's meeting together in it, but rather because there GOD met with them. Our Places of Worship are still Tabernacles of *Meeting*; Places in which we professedly go to meet with God, and more solemnly approach him. Where God is worshipp'd according to his own Institution and Appointment, he still records his Name, and we may expect the Accomplishment of what he has promis'd, that *he will come to his Worshipers and bless them*, Exod. 20. 24. *Wherever two or three are gathered together in his Name, he will be in the midst of them*, Mat. 18. 20. Whether that Text refer directly to Assemblies for Worship or not, we need not, I think, exclude this Sense in the Interpretation. God is now present with his worshipping Servants, as well as formerly, tho' there was something peculiar with respect to outward Glory, and the like, in the Manifestation of his Presence then; and it may be that visible *Shechinah*, or Glory, which fill'd the Places of Worship heretofore, may be consider'd as typical of a moral spiritual *Shechinah* and Glory under the Gospel; of that greater Measure of Light, Life and Comfort, that devout Men are favour'd with in Gospel-worship.

'Tis

'Tis of some Weight in this Matter, and a good Argument of a special, eminent Presence of God in Places of publick Worship under the Gospel, that the *Angels* are represented as waiting, and giving their Attendance therein. That celebrated Critick, Mr. *Joseph Mede*, thinks that when God is said to be in one Place more than another, 'tis to be understood of his Retinue or Train. "The King, saith he, is there where his Court and Retinue is; so the Lord of Hosts is there specially present, where the heavenly Guards, the blessed Angels, keep their Station and Rendezvous." And he endeavours to prove that all the Appearances of the divine Majesty in Scripture are describ'd by that Retinue: And indeed the *Shechinah* or Glory of God consisted, as many think, of the divine Majesty with Angels ministering to him, making up his Retinue, and executing his Commands. There were Ministers and Tokens of his Presence, and hence we find by God's Appointment *Cherubims* set up in the holy Place, overspreading and covering the Ark, call'd by the Apostle *Cherubim of Glory*, (*i. e.*) Symbols of the divine glorious Presence. The Angels were eminently present in God's Temple and Sanctuary of old, as a Signification of the divine Presence there; and the Apostle intimates that they are still present in Christian Assemblies and Places of publick Worship under the Gospel, 1 Cor. xi. 10. where he is admonishing to behave with Decency and Reverence in such Places, *because of the Angels*. Angels are present, as Spectators, and it may be for other Purposes, with Christians in their Worship: Hence *Corystome* calls the Church or Place of publick Worship, *the Place of Angels of Arch-angels, and Palace of God*.

Heb. ix;  
5.



Oh! my Soul, reflect on this Matter, and learn to reverence God's Sanctuary. Look upon the Place of Worship as the Place of God's special, solemn Presence, and let the Consideration of that compose thee into a grave, decent, reverend Behaviour: Endeavour for a Heart, Temper and Frame that becomes one, who is so often conversant with God, a Being of Sovereign Majesty and Greatness, infinite Purity and Holiness. Particularly,

I would resolve and endeavour to maintain Holiness of Manners, and Purity of Heart. Under the Law strict Orders were given, not to approach God whilst under any Defilement, and such as presum'd to do so, were to be cut off, *Lev. vii. 20.* God dwelt among that People, and out of Reverence to his Presence they were oblig'd to the utmost Caution and Circumspection in their whole Conduct. Their Eating, Drinking, all their Converse was under the Regulation of the Divine Law. Oh! my Soul, attend to this: Thou worshipping an holy God, therefore study to be holy. If thouregardest Iniquity in thy Heart, and allowest thyself in any Way of Wickedness and Defilement, God will not hear thy Prayer. Thy *Sacrifices are an Abomination to him.* Thou dost but afford him when thou appearest in his Presence. Take care therefore to *wash thy Hands in Innocency, and so compass his Altar about.*

*Psal. 66.*

18.

*Prov. 15.*

8.

*Psal. 26.*

6.

I would resolve and endeavour to get my Mind fill'd with a Sense of God, and of his special Presence, *when I am going to his House and Worship;* and when I enter his House, would endeavour to meet him there, directing my Mind and Thoughts to him, looking up for his Presence, and begging his Help.

I would

I would endeavour to behave myself with a becoming Awe and Reverence whilst in Worship, attending diligently and devoutly to the Work I am about, and at the same time keep my Eyes fix'd on God; watching against all Indecency and Rudeness in the Presence of the divine Majesty and his holy Angels, governing my outward Deportment suitable to such a Presence; guarding against whatever might be offensive and inconsistent with the Reverence requir'd, as laughing, gazing about, lolling, sleeping, &c. And especially I would guard my Thoughts and Affections, as knowing that the God I am worshipping, *searches the Heart, and trieth the Reins.* Lord, assist me by thy Grace, teach me the true Rule of thy Worship: May I look well to my Feet (my Affections) when I go to the House of God, and may I look well to them while there: Fill me with the *Shechinah* of thy Spirit, and constantly favour me with thy Presence: May I *see thy Power and thy Glory in thy Sanctuary*; then shall my Soul be satisfy'd as with Marrow and Fatness, and my Mouth shall praise thee with joyful Lips.

---

*Preparation for the Lord's Day.*

Saturday Night, 7 a-Clock.

I Have been brought thus far through another Specimen.  
II.  
Week: I find much Occasion for Thankfulness, not only that God has continued the usual Course of his kind Providence, but for some special Favours and Mercies, which as I desire to bless God for, so I would take some notice of them in my Diary. Oh! may I not be formal in such Things, but record the loving Kindnesses of God  
H h 2.      with

with all suitable Gratitude and Devotion! As I have matter of Praise before me, so matter of Complaint against myself; much reason to be humbled for such Infirmities, as I see still accompany me, and compass me about. Oh! when shall I be above and beyond these Complaints? However I have Reason to bless God that Things are no worse with me. In the main, this has been a comfortable Week: I have not been wholly left to myself; left to fall either into great Sins, or great Sufferings. I have not lost all my Time, nor quite neglected my Duty, either to God or Man; and I hope I may say I have had some Hours of comfortable Converse with God, particularly upon Thursday Night, when ----- Lord, accept my Acknowledgements of thy Grace and goodness towards me, and of my Miscarriages.

To-morrow is a Day set apart by the Appointment of God, for the special solemn Work of Religion, which I would now endeavour, in the best manner I can, to prepare my self for. Lord assist me therein! *Awake, oh North-wind, and come thou South, blow upon my Garden, that the Spices thereof may flow out.* I can't understand what they mean that object against the Morality of the Sabbath, and are for laying it common; certainly they are not friends to themselves. I can't but look upon it as a wise and merciful Institution; not only a Mark of God's sovereignty, but an Instance of his Kindness: Herein he hath join'd our Duty and Happiness. Whatever others do, I am sure I need such Pauses as these, in the Pursuits of the World, and desire to be thankful that I am so frequently call'd off from the defiling distracting Business of this Earth, and to turn my Face more directly towards Heaven. O! for Wisdom and Grace, to improve my Sabbaths aright, that every Sabbath might be

a Foretaste of my everlasting Sabbath, and as one of the Days of Heaven to me.

I purpose to morrow to pursue the Rules I have often heard recommended, and which I am convinc'd are just and reasonable (and accordingly have prescrib'd them to myself) concerning my Behaviour in the several Duties of the Lord's Day, secret, private and publick. I would often revise them, and always attend to them: And as I have abundant Reason to be sensible of my Omissions, Neglect of Rules, Mismanagement of sacred Work, it becomes me to remember my Faults this Day; and as I would censure my self, so I would take the present Occasion to renew my Resolutions, particularly in the following Instances:

I would take Care to lose none of the sacred Time of the Lord's Day, but diligently employ the whole of it in publick or secret Duties; in Works of Piety or Mercy (so far as the State and Strength of the Body will admit, and leave no Intervals and Parentheses of religious Exercises and Services, but such as may fit me to return to them with more Advantage.

I would make a great account of solemn Worship; and tho' I would be cautious, I don't aim too high, lest Disappointments turn to my Discouragement; yet I would always have Designs and Views suitable to such weighty Employment, as I am to be in through the Day, especially when engag'd in Worship. 'Tis something great and important I am about, when in the special and immediate Presence of God, conversing and transacting with him concerning the Affairs of the Soul and Eternity: Accordingly it becomes me to be solicitous about Success herein, and be in good earnest in all my Work.



I would resolve and endeavour to prepare myself duly for the Work of every Sabbath, and particularly of the next; would be early upon my Knees, endeavouring to get my Heart warm'd in secret Devotion; to awaken my Faculties, fix my Attention, bespeak the Presence of God with me, beg a Blessing upon the several Ordinances of the Day; upon the Minister or Ministers I may hear, whom I would never fail affectionately to recommend to God, desiring they may be help'd in delivering their Message, and that a suitable Word may be directed to my Heart.

I would be especially careful to join in the Devotion of the Congregation in the Prayers and Praises that are offer'd up. Alas! how much have I fail'd in this respect? How often do I withdraw my Attention (my Eyes and Thoughts rambling about) bearing no Part in the Worship? I purpose henceforth, to morrow particularly, to watch against this Trifling, and to keep close to the Work in hand, going along with the Minister in all his Petitions, not only hearing them, but setting my hearty *Amen* to them; making them my own, and unite in sending them up to Heaven. Lord, assist me by thy Grace!

I purpose, and shall endeavour to make some Advantage by every Sermon I hear. This may be done, even tho' it be none of the best, if it be not altogether Ramble and Impertinence; in which case, I confess, 'tis not easy to keep up Attention, much less employ Devotion; but if it be grave, solid and judicious, notwithstanding it have nothing extraordinary and new, I may improve by it; as in the Exercise of Grace, relishing known Truths, feeding upon them, delighting in them, &c. When I go to hear the Word of God, I do not always propose new Light, and further Instruction; much less

less should I propose the Entertainment of my Curiosity, but rather the warming my Heart, and having my Mind stirr'd up by way of Remembrance: Accordingly I would chiefly value such Preaching that has most of this Tendency; that is fitted to rouse the Conscience, and better the Heart, rather than tickle the Ear. I have been pleas'd with some Thoughts of the *truly honourable Mr. Boyle*, in one of his occasional Reflections; that upon the sight of a Looking-glass, with a rich Frame, he observes, "That tho' the curious Frame does P. 172.

" as well please as attract the Eye, yet it does not  
 " represent the Image of the Beholders Face; so  
 " the fine Expressions many applaud in Sermons,  
 " have no peculiar Virtue in them, have no Power  
 " like a good Looking-glass, to acquaint the Be-  
 " holder with the true Image of his own Complex-  
 " ion and Features; and often when a Glass has a  
 " rich and gaudy Frame, Childrens Eyes are so en-  
 " tertain'd and amused with it, that they are re-  
 " gardless of any thing else, and neglect to consult  
 " the usefuller Part, whose Office it is to discover  
 " to them themselves; so when there is too much  
 " of Rhetorick in a Sermon, many, that should not  
 " be Children, have their Attention not only so  
 " attracted, but so detain'd by that, that they are  
 " diverted from regarding the more instructive  
 " Part of the Discourse; and the more witty and  
 " critical sort of Auditors are so much more ac-  
 " custom'd to judge of Sermons, than to judge of  
 " themselves by them, that they deal with them,  
 " as if in this Glass a Man should only praise or  
 " discommend the emboss'd Images of the Frame,  
 " without caring to make use of the Glass it self,  
 " to mend any thing he finds out of order about  
 " him; and it must be confess'd, tho' I grieve and  
 " blush it can be truly so, that it is but too often

“ as the Scripture somewhere complaints, *like Peo-*  
 “ *ple like Priest* ; and that there is a sort of Preachers  
 “ (for I am loth to call them Divines) who ap-  
 “ pear more solicitous to make their Expressions,  
 “ than their Hearers Good, and had much rather  
 “ hear their Praises than their Sighs ; and that their  
 “ Auditors should rather admire their good Lan-  
 “ guage, than follow their best Counsel : In a  
 “ Word, in such kind of Sermons there is little  
 “ spoken either from the Heart or to the Heart,  
 “ the Orator and the Auditory tacitly agreeing to  
 “ deceive themselves ; and the Conversation of Sin-  
 “ ners being neither the Effect, nor the Aim of  
 “ such florid, but unedifying Discourses. The Bu-  
 “ siness is translated on both Sides, as if the Preacher  
 “ thought he had done his Part when he has shewn  
 “ his Wit, and the Hearers thought they had done  
 “ theirs, when they have commended it.” Con-  
 sider, oh my Soul ! that Devotion in hearing, and  
 Practice afterwards, is the end of hearing. Attend  
 to this at all times, and don’t trifle in the House of  
 God, and in the Affairs, of Eternity.

I purpose to employ some Time every Lord’s  
 Day Night, in reviewing what has pass’d in the  
 Day ; in censuring what has been amiss, working  
 upon my Heart what I have heard, in suitable Con-  
 fessions, Petitions and Praises, and especially in the  
 pleasing Contemplations of the State above, where  
 such Work as I now blunder and stammer in, will  
 be brought to its Perfection ; and Sabbath-Reli-  
 gion, particularly that more essential Part of it,  
*Gratitude and Praise*, will be better understood by  
 me. Lord ! tune my Heart more and more for  
 thy Work on Earth : Fit me for thy Day approach-  
 ing : Make me glad with thy Countenance ; and  
 after a few Days attendance more in thy outer  
 Court, may I be admitted within the Vail, and  
 make

make my Ascriptions with the rest of the Saints, to him that sits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.

Saturday Night, 6 a-Clock, before the  
Sacrament.

**T**O morrow is a very solemn Day, *the great* Specimen  
*Day of the Feast*; as the Jews us'd to call the III.  
last Day of one of their Festivals. 'Tis a Sabbath  
Day, and a Sacrament Day. I ought, I am sure,  
to make it a busy Day, and oh! that I may find  
it a good and comfortable Day.

The Circumstances of the present time naturally lead me to some Reflections, and further Resolutions. (1.) I desire to review the State of Things with me. I thank God for the Evidence I have of my Sincerity in the Christian Profession. I am not altogether at a Loss and in the dark as to my State in general, and therefore suppose I have not Occasion to go through the whole Process of Examination, as sometimes prescrib'd in Books. I cannot think this necessary for every Christian before every Sacrament; he should rather live so as to be always fit for that solemn Ordinance, was it to be part of every Day's Work, or every Week's Work, as in the primitive Church. I desire not to live a Stranger to my self, but daily to observe my Heart, Frame and Walk; often to review it, and state Accounts between God and my Soul. I bless God that this has been my Care, in some measure, and for the comfortable Evidence I have of Acceptance with him. Oh! that herein I may not be mistaken. *Search me, oh God, and know my Heart, try me and know my Thoughts, and see if there*  
be



*be any wicked Way in me, and lead me in the Way everlasting.*

Notwithstanding, 'tis not unreasonable, but what the Occasion requires of me, to employ some Time in examining Things, and looking back on what has pass'd this Week, this Month, and since the last Sacrament. How have I spent my Time---How have I improv'd my Sabbaths-----How have I managed my Calling-----How have I rul'd my Tongue-----How have I govern'd my Affections, Passions and Appetites----How have I perform'd the Duties of Worship? Have I been constant, serious and devout therein? What Victory have I gain'd over my Infirmities, and particularly that which the last Sacrament-Day I saw Reason to confess with so much Resentment, and that I had a special Reference to in my sacramental Vows, and in my other Devotions at the Lord's Table, and of which I have a Note in my Diary. Oh! my Soul! inquire into these Things, and accordingly now address thy self to God.

(2.) I would endeavour to trim my Lamp, and get my Heart into a solemn serious Frame, that if the Minister should be out of Frame, as it sometimes happens to the best, I may supply that Defect by the Warmth and Intenseness of my Devotion; to which Purpose I determine this Night to spend a fit Proportion of Time in suitable Exercises of Religion; and to be as early to morrow Morning, as the State of my Health and bodily Spirits will allow, in my Closet. Lord, grant me thy Presence, and assist me by thy Grace!

(3.) I would endeavour especially to preserve an holy rejoicing Frame through the Work of the next Day, and particularly when at the Lord's Table. How great a Dignity and Privilege is it to sit among the Saints there! Whilst Men of a profane

fane and worldly Spirit neglect and despise these Enjoyments, I would glory and triumph in them. Lord! I deserve not to eat the Crumbs that fall from thy Table, and behold! I am entertain'd amongst thy Children, have the Covenant of thy Grace seal'd and confirm'd to me, and receive an Investiture in all the rich and transcendent Privileges it it. Infinite Grace! I know not which to admire most, the Love that made the Feast, or that has made me a Guest. O! my Soul, rejoice in the Lord: Tho' the Fig-tree don't blossom, yet will I rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my Salvation. And oh! that those woeful Infirmities, that hang about me, were out of the Way, that I could get more above them: However they need not hinder my Gratitude and rejoicing; I know they are not allow'd. I am in pursuit of a Conquest, and shortly the Victory shall be compleat. And in the mean time I have in the Ordinance before me, no small Encouragement: The Cup I there take, is the New Testament, in the Blood of Christ, *shed for Remissions of Sins*. Lord! I'll set the Suffering of my Saviour against my Sins. I am a Sinner, but I'll plead the Mercy of thy Nature, the Grace of thy Covenant, and the Blood of Atonement, and desire with Triumph again to lay my Hand on the Head of the great Victim. *Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect? 'tis Christ that died---*

(4.) I purpose and resolve upon a Life of holy Obedience and greater Exactness therein; and in order to it, would now peruse my Diary, observe how things have been with me, consider how at present they are, and contrive how they may be better for the future; Lord, help me by thy Grace! Be with me in my future Conduct! Grant me thy Presence in the Work of to-morrow at thy Table,

Table, and in all the Duties of the Day. May I with Freedom and Chearfulness go through the several Services of it, and in all be accepted in the Beloved.

---

*The Pleasure of Worship in Prospect and Review.*

Saturday Night, 7 a-Clock.

Specimen  
IV.

**I** Have another Lord's Day before me, and desire now to set my self to prepare for it. I have known some Christians, particularly one, who us'd to rejoice when in the Circumstances I am now in, viz. taking leave of the World on Saturday Night. He would meet and welcome the Sabbath with a Gladness and sort of Triumph, and was us'd to part with it, and return to the World again on Monday Morning with a sort of Reluctancy. The like happy Frame the Psalmist manifestly discovers, *Psal. cxxii. 1. I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the House of the Lord;* which is also express'd, *Psal. xlii. 1---4 Psal. lxiii. 1, 2, 3. Psal. lxxxiv. 1---4.* And as he long'd for the Solemnities of God's House, and was delighted in them, so it is plain, he had a Pleasure in the Review of them: *A Day in thy Courts, says he, is better than a thousand, Psal. lxxxiv. 10.*

How many, alas! are there, who are utterly Strangers to such a Temper? Who have no Value for a Sabbath, nothing depending at such a Time that they reckon of Moment and Consequence, and who have no true Concern and Solitude of Mind about the Transactions of it. Custom brings them to the Places of publick Worship: Some of them may vouchsafe a superficial Attention, and now and then commend the Sermon, especially if the

the Preacher acts the Orator; but ordinarily their Humour leads them to censure, and, it may be, despise both Sermon and Preacher: And as to the great and weighty Concerns of the Day, success in Worship, sanctifying God in his House and Ordinances, maintaining a devout Frame of Mind, Intercourse with God, and the like, these are Things they know nothing of. nor do they trouble themselves with.

And oh! my Soul, what Reason have I to complain here! How little do I know of the devout Frame, as this way express'd, *viewing and reviewing the Sabbath with Pleasure and Delight!* Am I not sometimes ready to say, *What a Weariness is it?* when will the Sabbath be gone? Instead of triumphing in the Work, am dull and heartless, and often gloomy and dejected at the Close of it. Endeavour that this Matter may be mended, and that thou may'st welcome the Sabbath, delight in the Services of it, and look back upon them when they are over, with Complacency and Rejoicings. Oh! when shall it be thus with me, more thus, always thus? To promote such an happy Temper, several Things are necessary.

'Tis necessary that I have an holy, sanctified Heart, otherwise I can never sanctify God's Day, nor delight in his Work, but shall be *Piscis in arido*, out of my Element, when employ'd therein; nor is the first vital Principle of Grace in the bare Essence of Being of it sufficient; but some Improvement and Advance must be endeavour'd, giving the Soul a strong Byass towards God and Religion.

'Tis necessary. I have some Experience of the Comforts of Worship, of Intercourse and Converse with God in his House and Ordinances; that I have, sometimes at least, tasted of these refin'd, sublime



sublime Delights. The *Psalmist* had seen the Power and Glory of God in his Sanctuary; not only an external *Shechinah*, but a moral *Shechinah*, as I may call it; the Glory of God's special Presence, filling and refreshing his Soul, satisfying him as with Marrow and Fatness; and hence he cries out, *My Soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee*, *Psalm*. lxxiii, 1. He that has drank of the Rivers of God's Pleasure in his House, will find his Mouth in some Measure put out of Taste with other Things: And as without this Experience the Work of the Sabbath, and particularly of publick Ordinances, will be dull and heavy, want its attractive Excellencies, so it is not possible I should much desire it: If I have never found Delight in it, I shall not find much longing after it.

'Tis necessary that I consider this Frame and Bent of Mind (*a Pleasure in the Prospect and Review of Sabbath-work*) as a great and valuable Attainment, and accordingly be solicitous about it, often and earnestly pray for it; and if I still find my self defective, set Time apart for more solemn Prayer and Fasting, with a special Reference hereto. Lord, quicken my Zeal in this particular.

'Tis necessary that I be diligent and attentive, and keep a strict Watch over my Heart and Frame through the Day; that I be mortified to the World, get it out of my Thoughts and Affection; that I be much in the Angelick Work of Praise; that I set my self apart intirely for the great Business of Religion, and on this Occasion especially *be in the Fear of the Lord all the Day long*.

O my God assist me by thy Grace herein! Grant me more abundant Communications of thy Spirit; tune this poor dull Heart for thy Service; endear thy Day and the Work of it to my Soul; that I may call the Sabbath *a Delight, the Holy*  
of

of the Lord, honourable, and be glad when they say unto me, *Let us go into the House of the Lord.*

---

Lord's-day Night, 7 a-Clock.

**T**HIS Day I heard a Sermon from *Luke xvi. 2c.* Abraham said, *Son remember that thou in thy Life-time receivdest thy good Things, and likewise Lazarus evil Things, but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*

After a fit Introduction, and some Remarks upon the Parable in general, it was observ'd, that in the Text, which is Part of *Abraham's* Answer to the rich Man, we have (1.) The Compellation or the Name he gives him, *Son, Son remember that, &c.* He doth not revile him, nor call him hard Names, how wicked and unworthy soever he had been: Whence one observes, as was suggested, how indecent and unbecoming it is for Christians to treat one another with Terms of Contempt and Bitterness. The *Angel* would not bring a railing Accusation against the Devil; and here *Abraham* calleth the rich Sensualist *Son*. Reproachful Language never serv'd a good Cause, and very ill becomes the Mouth of a good Man. Learn, O my Soul! some Instruction from hence: I could not but think this a pertinent Remark: pertinent to the Case of others, to my own Case often. Lord, help me to profit by it. (2.) We have also the different States and Conditions of the Persons concern'd in the Parable, both here and hereafter: One had *his good Things here*, the other *his evil Things here*; hereafter the one was *comforted*, the other *tormented*. (3.) An Admonition to the rich Man, to call to mind the former State of Things, both with him and *Lazarus*; and this as one Ground and Reason of their different State

State hereafter : *Remember that thou in thy Life-time receivest thy good Things, and likewise Lazarus evil Things, but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.* He puts him in mind that he had already had the Happiness he chose, and rested in, the good Things he valued most ; whereas pious *Lazarus* had liv'd in Poverty, Disgrace and outward Sorrow ; and thereupon he appeals to him, as it were, concerning the Equity of that Distinction, that was *now* made between them : *Now he is comforted, and thou art tormented* : As if he had said, Is it not reasonable it should be so? &c.

Several Things were observ'd from hence, and insisted upon, particularly, (1.) That often bad Men have a large Measure of good Things in this Life, and good Men a large Measure of evil Things. This was explain'd and limited in several Propositions : Some Account was given of the good Things of the one, and the evil Things of the other, in the present Life. (2.) It was observ'd, that 'tis but just, a Distinction should be made in favour of good Men hereafter, that the Wicked who have receiv'd their good Things in this Life, should be tormented in the other Life ; and that good Men, who have receiv'd their evil Things here, should be comforted hereafter. The Equity of this was argued, and from the whole the Providence of God vindicated from a common Objection, grounded upon the present Prosperity of the wicked, and the Sufferings of good Men. Some Advantages were taken notice of that good Men have at present : They have many spiritual good Things with their outward evil Things, and then infinite will be their Advantage hereafter ! Whilst the Wicked are tormented, they shall be comforted. O my Soul ! endeavour a suitable Improvement of what thou hast heard : Never more envy the Prosperity of the Wicked.

Wicked. This was urged upon thee, recollect what was offer'd: That Happiness is but a Blaze and a Dream. 'Tis a poor Relief to the rich Man in Hell, that he once liv'd in Pomp and Pleasure. Cheerfully submit to such evil Things, as by the Providence of God may be thy Lot and Trial here. There is a great Deal of Wisdom, and even Tenderness and Love in the Appointment of them, as was suggested; they will be soon over, and thou shalt be comforted. Help me, O my God! to bear thy Discipline with a calm chearful Mind, waiting for thy Salvation: Direct me in the Choice of an Happiness: May I not have my Portion in this Life, my good Things here! I leave the sumptuous Fare, the Purple and fine Linen to such as know nothing of better Enjoyments; 'tis enough if I have thy Supports in all the evil Things thro' which I pass now, and be comforted hereafter.

---

### LORD'S-DAY Night, 7 a Clock.

**I** This Day heard a Sermon upon *John xii. 26.* *Specimen*  
*If any Man serve me, let him follow me.* *Sixth.*

After the Division and Explication of the Words, as usual in Sermons, the Example of Christ was set before us for our Imitation. It was promis'd, that he being an *extraordinary* Person, his Example must be suppos'd to have something *extraordinary* in it; and indeed was in sundry Instances above our Imitation. This was illustrated and shewn in several Particulars; but tho' we cannot imitate him throughout, in many Things we may and ought.

I i

Some



Some Things he did to confirm our Faith, beget in us Reverence of himself; as when he rebuk'd the Winds and the Seas, walked upon the Water, open'd the Eyes of the Blind by a Touch, and rais'd the Dead by a Word; other Things he did for our Imitation, *leaving us an Example that we should tread in his Steps.*

Several Particulars were propos'd, wherein we are to follow him, as (1) in Holiness. He was eminently holy, without the least Taint or Pollution: Holy in his Birth, and in all the Actions of his Life; hence he is call'd the *holy Child Jesus*. *The holy one and the just.* He was holy in his Thoughts, Words, Affections, Actions: Holy in all manner of Conversation; none ever convinc'd him of Sin, and herein we are to follow him. (2) We are to follow him in his early Piety. (3) In his filial Obedience and dutiful Regard to his Parents. (4) In his Devotion, particularly his Prayerfulness. (5) We are to follow him in his Constancy, Diligence, and Zeal in the Work of God. (6) In his steady Regard to the glory of God in all he did. (7) In his Contempt of this World, the Honours and all the Enjoyment of it. (8) We are to follow him in his Humility, Patience, Meekness, &c. (9) In his charitable forgiving Temper, even towards his worst Enemies. (10) In his full Resignation to the Will of God. (11) In his peaceable Conduct and Deportment in the World. (12) In his Beneficence and Readiness to do good, both to the Souls and Bodies of Men. (13) In his Composure and Evenness of Mind under all Occurrences. He could go through any Bustle and Hurry of Business, and never be ruffled, bear the Hosanna's and Applauses of some, and the rudest Insults of others, without losing his Temper. (14) In the Spirituality of his Frame: He was always breathing something of God and Heaven, improving every Occasion

Occasion to the Purposes of Religion; witness his Parables and Discourses with his Disciples and others he conversed with. (15) We are to follow him in his fervent Desires after Heaven, and the Blessedness thereof, and the constant Reference he had thereto.

The Duty and Reasonableness of following Christ was prov'd by several Considerations; and as I am convinc'd of my Obligations hereunto, I desire to act accordingly. Lord, help me by thy Grace. These are indeed known Truths, what I have often read in Books, and heard from the Pulpit, but notwithstanding that, I don't think myself the less concern'd to attend them: And as I have endeavour'd to recollect them as they have been this Day set before me, I would endeavour to make the Practice of them the great Care and Business of my Life. A Christian is a Follower of Christ, and the more exactly he follows him, the better Christian he is. We are predestinated and appointed to be conform'd to and bear his Image, *Rom. viii. 29.* And indeed in this Conformity, in the several divine Virtues and Graces that have been mentioned, not only our present Meetness for Heaven consists, but Heaven itself very much consists in it: *When he appears, we shall be like him,* O, my Soul! frequently contemplate this beautiful glorious Example; often bring it into View, and set it before thee; examine and govern thy Heart, Frame and Actions by it. In any doubtful Cases, or when under Temptation, ask thyself how Christ would have acted in such Circumstances, and act accordingly. Lord! impress my Mind more deeply with the Rules of thy Word, and the Example of my great Master. I bewail it, that I am so unlike him, that I have followed him no more closely: Transform  
I i 2 me

*Heb. 12. 2:*

*J. bn. 17:5*

*John 3. 2.*

me more and more by the renewing of my Mind; bleſs the Truths that I have heard this Day; teach me to profit by them: May I in all Things approve myſelf to thee in well doing, and may the ſame Mind be in me that was alſo in Chriſt.

---

Lord's-Day Night, 6 a-Clock.

*Specimen  
Seven.*

I Have paſs'd ſo far through another Sabbath; but alas! how little Improvement! how little Converſe have I had with God in his Houſe and Worſhip? How little acquainted am I with the true Spirit of Devotion? I heard a Sermon from that Text *Pſ. xxxii 10. Many Sorrows ſhall be to the Wicked, but he that truſteth in the Lord, Mercy ſhall compaſs him about*: In which the Miſeries of a vicious ſinful Life were diſplay'd, ſuch as reſpect the Body and the Soul, Time and Eternity; but how little was I affected? I am ſure not ſuitably to the Subject and the Importance of the Diſcourſe; I would recover what I can of it now, and preach it over again to myſelf.

The Truth is, I have trifled and been very much out of Frame through the greateſt Part of this Day. I was dull and unattentive at Prayer; at leaſt my Attention was often dropp'd; and tho' it be not uſual with me, it ſo happen'd to day, that *I fell aſleep* under the Sermon, and this ſtupid negligent Frame I continued thro' the other part of the Day, the Afternoon: I ſlept ſeveral times during the Sermon, and more than once at Prayer. Wretch as I am; was this like a Worſhipper! Herein I affronted

fronted the great God, his attending Angels, the Minister that officiated, the whole Congregation ; deserted and slighted the Devotion of it ; griev'd the Serious and Devout that observ'd me, set an ill Example to the Careless, and lost my own Part of the Blessing. Have Mercy upon me, O my God ! I abhor myself, and repent in Dust and Ashes.

Nor need I be very much at a Loss to account for this woful Miscarriage. I have of late lost something of my Tenderness of Conscience, Warmth and Zeal in Religion. I have been more superficial in secret Duties, and in general less serious in my Course and walk than I us'd to be. I spent no Time last Night, in preparing for the Sabbath, and begging a Blessing upon the Work of it. I trifled away some Hours, after the necessary Business of the Day was over, in Conversation and -----with----- I lay in Bed this Morning till it was almost Time to go to publick Worship : And tho' according to Custom I pray'd, it was very short. and very cold, and indeed to no Purpose. I went to the House of God in a careless light Frame ; talk'd all the way, as I went, about mere Impertinences with----- When I came to the Place of Worship, I had no serious Thoughts of God, of the Awefulness of the Presence I was in, and Importance of the Work I was about ; never look'd up to Heaven for Assistance, nor endeavour'd to set myself on my Guard : Horrid Stupidity and Non-attention ! How often have I smarted for such Folly, and yet not reclaim'd ? *Bray a Fool in a Mortar, yet will not his Foolishness depart from him.* Lord, I would take Shame to myself, and humble myself before thee ; rouse my Resolutions of more Watchfulness and Care for the future : For thy Name sake, O Lord, pardon mine Iniquity, for it is great.



## SATURDAY Night Six a-Clock.

Eighth

Specimen.

Ep. Leigh-

ton's Pre-

face before

one of his

Sermons,

p. 39.

“ THERE is no Exercise so delightful to  
 “ those that are truly Godly, as the so-  
 “ lemn Worship of God, if they find his power-  
 “ ful and sensible Presence in it; and indeed there  
 “ is nothing on Earth more like to Heaven, than  
 “ that is. But when he withdraws himself, and  
 “ withholds the Influence and Breathings of his  
 “ Spirit in his Service, then good Souls find no-  
 “ thing more lifeless and uncomfortable. But there  
 “ is this Difference, even at such a Time, betwixt  
 “ them and those that have no spiritual Life in  
 “ them at all, that they find and are sensible of  
 “ this Difference, whereas the other know not what  
 “ it means. And for the most part, the greatest  
 “ Number of those that meet together with a Pro-  
 “ fession to Worship God, yet are such as do not  
 “ understand this Difference. Custom and Forma-  
 “ lity draws many to the ordinary Places of pub-  
 “ lick Worship, and fills too much of the room.  
 “ And sometimes Novelty and Curiosity, to Places  
 “ not ordniary, has a large Share. But how few  
 “ are there that come on Purpose to meet with  
 “ God in his Worship, and to find his Power in  
 “ it, strengthening their weak Faith, and weakening  
 “ their strong Corruptions; affording them Pro-  
 “ vision of spiritual Strength and Comfort against  
 “ Times of Trial; and in a word, advancing them  
 “ some Steps forward in their Journey towards Hea-  
 “ ven, where Perfection and Happiness dwell?  
 “ Certainly these sweet Efforts are to be found  
 “ in these Ordinances, if we would look after  
 “ them. Let it grieve us then, that we have so  
 “ often lost our Labour in the Worship of God  
 “ through our own neglect, and intreat the Lord  
 “ that

“ that at this time he would not send us empty  
 “ away ; for how weak-soever the Means be, if he  
 “ put to his Strength the work shall be done, in  
 “ some Measure, to his Glory and our Edifica-  
 “ tion.”

Lord! may I find thy powerful sensible Pre-  
 sence in thy House and Ordinances ; in Prayer,  
 Hearing, and every Part of divine Worship. How  
 often, alas! do I want it? This Comfort howe-  
 ver I have, that I know when I want it, find and  
 feel the want ; know when thou art present and  
 when thou art absent. I bless thee I am not whol-  
 ly insensible of these Things, and unconcern'd a-  
 bout them ; but that sometimes I have met with  
 thee in the Solemnities of thy Service.

Lord ! afford me the powerful Influences of thy  
 Grace more and more ; and thereof particularly fa-  
 vour me with this great Blessing the ensuing Day ;  
 I would now bespeak thy Presence ; pray, prepare  
 and wait for it : Make me joyful in the House of  
 Prayer, glad with thy Countenance ; may I see *thy*  
*Power and Glory* in thy Sanctuary ; without which  
 it will have no Glory.

---

Lords-Day Night Seven a-Clock.

“ **B**lessed are they that dwell in thy House, *Ninth Spe-*  
*cimen.*  
 “ saith the Psalmist, and he adds this Rea-  
 “ son, *They will be still praising thee.* There is in-  
 “ deed always in God’s House, both fit Oppor-  
 “ tunities and plentiful Matter of his Praises. But  
 “ the greatest Number of those that frequent his  
 “ House, do not *dwell in it*, their Delight and  
 “ Affection is not there, therefore they cannot  
 “ praise him. They come in as Strangers, and have  
 “ no.

“ no Skill of the Songs of Praise. Yea and the  
 “ very Children of the Family, that Worship in  
 “ Spirit and in Truth, find their Instruments (their  
 “ Hearts) very often quite out of tune for Praises ;  
 “ and sometimes most of all, when Praises are most  
 “ requisite. They still find such abundant Cause  
 “ of Complaint in themselves, weighing down their  
 “ Spirits, that they can hardly at all wind them up  
 “ to magnify the God of their Mercies. If we  
 “ would take a View, and look back upon our Car-  
 “ riage one Day, in the Presence of God, who  
 “ among us would not find much Work for sad  
 “ Thoughts ? Would not one find that he had an  
 “ hard and stony Heart ? Another a Light, uncon-  
 “ stant, wandering Heart, to complain of ? A third  
 “ an unbelieving Heart, and some of all these.  
 “ And they (if such there be) that have both deep-  
 “ ly sorrow’d and been largely comforted, will pos-  
 “ sibly, for all that, upon former sad Experience,  
 “ be full of Fears and Jealousies, that this sweet  
 “ Temper will not be of long Continuance ; that  
 “ e’er long the World, or some Lust, will find or  
 “ make a Way to creep in, and banish these heaven-  
 “ ly Thoughts, and trouble that Peace and Joy  
 “ that accompanies them ? Yet notwithstanding all  
 “ these Causes of Grief or Fear, our Causes of  
 “ Praise are both more and greater ; and there is  
 “ no Reason that the Sense of our own Evil should  
 “ prejudice the Acknowledgment of God’s Good-  
 “ ness ; yea, rather it should stir us up to extol it  
 “ so much the more. Cease not to bemoan the  
 “ Evils of your own Hearts ; but withal forget not  
 “ to magnify the Riches of his Grace towards you.  
 “ These two will not hinder one another, but the  
 “ due Intermixture of them will make a very good  
 “ Harmony ; and the Fruit of them will be this, you  
 “ shall have still more Cause to praise, and less to  
 “ com-

' complain. When the Lord shall find your hum-  
 " ble Acknowledgements of his Grace, he will  
 " delight to bestow more Grace upon you, and Bp. Leigh-  
 " will subdue those Iniquities for you, which you ton's Pre-  
 " cannot; and tho' he is pleased to do it but gra- face before  
 " dually, by little and little, yet in the End the a Sermon.  
 " Conquest shall be full. p. 141.

O my God! impress and form my Heart for  
 the Work of Praise, especially on the Day of  
 Praise; how much am I reprobate to this good  
 Work? I have been about it this Day, but alas  
 how low my Notes, how flat my Devotions? The  
 Truth of it is, when Things are best with me, I  
 can't allow my self to call such dull broken Ser-  
 vices as mine, such languid faint Essays, *Praises*;  
 and therefore, after I have been attempting the high  
 Employment, and blundering in it, I find, me-  
 thinks, a Sort of Satisfaction in reserving it to the  
 State above, *then I shall praise him*: In the mean  
 while I would be doing something; aiming at some-  
 thing, till the blessed time is come when I shall be  
 able to sing the Song of *Zion*, and no more hang  
 my Harp upon the Willows. Lord, may I now  
 learn a little of the *new Song*, so well understood  
 above; teach me some Notes of it? I would be  
 daily exercis'd in it, especially on thy Day; and  
 tho' I can't yet wholly put off my Sackcloth, nor  
 will the Noise of the Shout of Joy be always dis-  
 cern'd from the Noise of Weeping, I desire not-  
 withstanding all Discouragements, to be a Student  
 in thy Praile; to make it my great Subject on so-  
 lemn Days especially; to *enter into thy Gates with*  
*Thanksgiving, and into thy Courts with Praise*; O may  
*I dwell in thy House and still praise thee.*

Thursday



Thursday Night Six a-Clock.

*Temp Spe-  
cimen.*

**I** This Day heard a Sermon from *Psal. xv. 2. And speaketh the Truth in his Heart.* After some Account of the Penman, Occasion and Design of the Psalm, the Words were consider'd as an Answer to the Question propos'd in the first Verse; *Lord, who shall abide in thy Tabernacle, who shall dwell in thy holy Hill?* And this Observation was made from them (*viz.*) That 'tis a necessary Part of the Character of an approved Worshipper of God here, who also is design'd for Heaven hereafter, that *he speaketh the Truth in his Heart.* The Method was (I.) To explain the Character, *He speaketh the Truth in his Heart.* (II.) To confirm the Proposition, That this is a necessary Part of a good Man's Character. (III.) To make Application.

1<sup>st</sup>, To explain the Character, *He speaketh the Truth in his Heart*: And here it was suggested, that the Thing intended is Integrity and Sincerity in our Language; expressing the genuine Sentiments of the Mind without Disguise: To illustrate which several Things were observed, as (1.) That a Person may speak the Truth in the Heart, when, strictly, there is not Truth in the Words; as when he reports a mistaken Matter of Fact after another; if he believes what he saith to be true, he's not guilty of a Lie, even though it be false; though in this Case we ought to be cautious, and not too hastily take up a Report. We must never assert positively what we don't know to be true, or have not sufficient Reason to think so: And still greater Caution is to be used, when others may receive Prejudice by a mistaken, and false Report. (2.) A Person may speak what is Fact and true, and yet not speak the Truth in his Heart; as when he  
thinks

thinks what he affirms as Fact is not Fact, though really it be Fact: *He speaks not Truth in his Heart*, though there be Truth in his Words. (3.) There are several Modes of Expressions that carry in them an Appearance of Falshood, and yet are not so; nor do they at all partake of the Nature of a Lie; as Metaphors, Ironies, Hyperboles, &c. (4.) A Person may act contrary to his Words and Declarations, and yet not be chargeable with Lying; as when we declare our Purpose to do, or not to do a Thing, and afterwards see Reason to go contrary to the Declaration; in this Case there may be no Violation of the Laws of Truth. Some Limitations and Cautions were added here, which I desire not to forget: For Instance, that what we say and express, as our Purpose be truly so, and contain the present Sense of our Minds, that if the Declaration be not rash, and that if we don't recede from the Resolution or Purpose we have declared, without good Reason. In buying and selling, for Example, we should not be hasty to declare we will give no more, or take no less; much less declare this to serve ourselves in the Bargain, when we have no such Meaning; this is Lying, and fraudulent Lying. O my Soul! be on thy Watch here: So much Regard is to be had to Veracity, and so much Distance kept from the very Appearance of a Lie, that I would never make Declarations of this Kind, till I have weigh'd Matters well, and my Resolution is fix'd; and when I have detain'd myself, I would ordinarily stand to my Word, and not reverse it upon every little Inconvenience, and never without explaining myself to those with whom I am concern'd, *Psal. xv. 4.* (5.) The chief Requisite here is, *that there be a Correspondence between the inward Sentiments and the outward Expressions.* A Lie is, *quando Os & Cor dissentiunt,*

*dissentiant*, when we speak one Thing and think another: And on the other Hand, we speak the Truth in our Heart, when the Tongue is *Index Animi*, doth truly interpret the Mind.

And here we were admonish'd, that this sacred Regard to Truth is to be preserv'd always, especially from Naratives, or Representations of Facts; when we relate any thing as said or done by ourselves or others, we should speak with Sincerity or Simplicity; without any romantick Addition to embellish the Story, and give it a Turn to our own Purpose. Oh! may I be cautious in this Particular, and not suffer Pride, Malice, Envy, or any other sinful Passion, to byass me in my Story; but whenever I represent any thing as said or done, I would strictly keep to the Laws of Truth. The same Regard to Truth is to be preserv'd in Promises, and in Matters of Testimony, or in Witness-bearing: Oh may I never take up a Reproach against my Neighbour, much less invent one!

The next Particular insisted upon, was to confirm the Observation, and shew that this is a necessary Part of the Character of an approved Worshipper of God here, who is also design'd for Heaven hereafter, that *he speaketh the Truth in his Heart*. The Text was urged to this Purpose: It was urged that Veracity and Truth is represented as a Branch of the new Nature. And farther, that Liars are expressly excluded Heaven.

*Eph. 4. 24.*

25.

59.

*Rev. 21. 8.*

27.

In the Application, among other Things, several Arguments were offer'd against the Sin of Lying, as being the direct Reverse of the Grace here recommended; which I desire now to Review, and always keep in Mind. It was argued that Truth is the Nature of God, and Lying most contrary thereto. 'Tis, among those Things, that

*Heb. 6. 18*

that he has a distinguish'd Abhorrence of, and that are an *Abomination to the Lord*. O my Soul! *Prov. 6. 17.* dread that<sup>o</sup> which will make thee unlike God, and hateful to him. <sup>19.</sup> It was argued, that Lying is a gross Abuse of the noble Organ of Speech, the Tongue, so often called our *Glory*; that 'tis an Enemy to Society, and tends not only to disturb, but dissolve it, as it destroys mutual Trust and Confidence, without which Society can't long subsist; that 'tis in itself infamous, and generally so accounted: Hence 'tis that the Imputation of a Lie is so much resented. It was urged, that the Light of Nature condemns it, and that it has been inveigh'd against by some of the wiser Heathens, that 'tis particularly and eminent-*Tit. 1. 12.* ly the Sin of the Devil; when he first discover'd himself to the World, it was with a Lye in his Mouth. And our Saviour represents him as *the Father of Lies and Liars*. *Gen. 3. 4.* A Liar is a Child of the Devil, his Offering, partakes of his Nature, and bears his Image in a very lively Manner. It was argued, that a lying Tongue is a certain Mark of an unrenew'd, un sanctify'd Heart, that it has a *Col. 3. 9.* great deal of Infidelity and Atheism in it. We would *Prov. 13. 5* not lie, if we were assured those we convers'd with could discern our Thoughts, and discover the Baseness. God sees in secret, knows what's conceal'd, and yet we regard it not; an Intimation that either we don't believe his Presence, or don't stand in awe of his Authority. To conclude, as Lying is the Character of a wicked Man, so it effectually, and for ever, shuts the Soul out of Heaven. This is imply'd in the Text, and expressed in other Scriptures in the plainest Terms.

*Rv. 21.*

*27.*

— 22. 15. — 21. 8. *Prov. 15. 5. 9.*

O my



O my Soul! receive the Admonition that has been given thee; study Truth in the inward Parts; let Integrity and Truth always accompany thee, and preserve thee; speak the Truth in thy Heart. I am thankful for any Conviction and Sense I have of the Evil of Lying; Lord, increase my Abhorrence of it: As a farther Assistance and Help against this mean, sordid, pernicious Vice, I would endeavour and resolve, in Pursuit of the Directions laid before us in the Sermon, to mortify those Passions and Corruptions from whence this Sin of Lying more ordinarily flows, and which are the chief Occasion of it; *As out of the Heart proceedeth evil Thoughts*, so from the same Fountain proceed evil Words. And I would, with the greatest Zeal, set myself against such Corruptions, as upon Observation I find more commonly betray me into this Iniquity: Pride often indites our Speech, and coins many a Lie; so Envy, Covetousness, Malice, &c. I would endeavour to cleanse myself from all this Filthiness: There never will be a regular Tongue while there is an unmortified Heart. If I love the World inordinately, 'tis a thousand to one I shall be often stretching a Point to promote a worldly Interest; and if I hate my Brother, 'tis the same Odds I shall reproach him. Lord, help me to purge the Fountain, and then the Streams will be pure. When the Spring of a Clock, and all the Movements are right, the Hand will go right; and so 'tis here. The Tongue follows the inward Inclination. I would resolve to do nothing that may need a Lie. If *Gabaza's* Covetousness had not shamed him, he had not wanted a Lie to excuse him. *He that walks uprightly, walks surely and safely* in this, as well as other Respects, May I do nothing that's dishonourable and mean, nothing that can't bear the Light, and then I shall have

Matt. 15.9.

Prov 10.9.

have little Temptation to Lying. I would endeavour for a lively Sense of the Eye of God upon me, acting and speaking in his Presence. Lord, I desire to set thee always before me; thou understandest my Thoughts as perfectly as others do my Words. I would consider before I speak, and not speak much or rashly. I would often think of the Severity of a future Judgment, when every Secret shall be made manifest, and the Hypocrite and Liar exposed before Angels and Men. Lastly I would frequently beg divine Assistance herein.

Prov. 29.  
20.

Psal. 119.

29.

Prov. 30. 8.

O my God! help me in my future Conduct, remove from me the Way of Lying; may the Law of Kindness and Truth be in my Tongue; may I take Heed to my Ways, that I sin not with my Tongue. I bewail my past Miscarriages in this Respect, and flee to thy Mercy through the Blood of Christ: Bless to me the Instructions that have been this Day given me; let no Iniquity prevail against me; keep back thy Servant from presumptuous Sins, and cleanse me from secret Faults. I commit my Thoughts, Desires, and Tongue to thy Conduct and Government; may I think and act in thy Fear, and always speak the Truth in my Heart.

2<sup>nd</sup>

Thursday Night Six a-Clock.

I Was this Day attending publick Worship? the Minister preach'd from *Matt. vii. 12. Therefore, all Things, whatsoever ye would that Men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.* As I often found myself touch'd by the Discourse, censur'd and convinc'd; I desire  
now

now to recollect what I can, and make Application to my own Soul. Lord, assist me by thy Grace.

The Words were consider'd as an admirable Rule prescribed by our Saviour, for the due ordering our Conduct and Behaviour towards our Neighbour; touching which, it was observ'd, that this Rule is not only agreeable to the Law of Nature, but a Dictate of it: It seems written upon the Heart and Consciences of all Men, and what every one, that understands and considers it, assents to off Hand. Some of the heathen Moralists, that knew nothing of the Bible, discover'd the Equity of this Maxim, and have recommended it. *Diogenes Laertius* tells us, in the Life of *Aristotle*, that he being asked how Men should demean themselves towards Friends, answer'd, as they would wish their Friends should carry towards them. *Isocrates* frequently touches the same Rule. Among his Admonitions to young Men, this is one; manage thy Anger towards those that offend, as thou wouldst judge becoming in others towards thyself offending. Again, be thou such towards thy Parents, as thou would'st wish thy Children should be towards thee: And elsewhere, hereby thou wilt very much raise thy Reputation, if it shall appear, thou dost not those Things thyself, thou would'st reprehend in others doing them. This was remark'd to signify, that the Rule here prescrib'd has so much of natural Equity in it, that it has the Suffrage and Vote of all Mankind; however they practise, they can't but agree, that they ought to do as they wou'd be done by.

It was farther observ'd, that this Rule comprehends all the Duty we owe to our Neighbour, and therefore our Saviour calls it in the Text, *the Law and the Prophets*. Whatever the Law and the Prophets hath enjoin'd, with Reference to this Matter,



ter, is contain'd in this Compend, *doing to others as we would they should do unto us*: The like Abridgment the *Apostle* gives us of the second Table of the Law, *He that loveth hath fulfilled the Law.* Rom. 13  
 It was also observ'd, that this Rule supposes every Man loves himself, and has a tender Regard to his own Interest; if self-love was not natural, deep rooted, and inseparable from us, it had not been made the Measure of our acting towards others. It was again observ'd, that as we truly love ourselves, and desire our own Happiness, so the Rule includes the other great Rule of the Gospel, *that we love our Neighbour as ourselves*; the one is the Foundation of the other, and must first be learnt, or the other will never be practised. Why must I not injure my Neighbour, any more than I would not be injured myself? The Reason is, because I am to love him as my self, and as sincerely desire his Welfare as my own, Lord, teach me this Love, and there will be an End of all Insults, Wrongs hostile Invasions and Oppressions.

Next, the Rule was explain'd; in order to which it was suggested, that it is not to be understood that our Desire and Will, however byass'd and deprav'd, is to be the Measure of our actings towards others. A Person may will another should do to him what is hurtful and sinful, but that will not warrant his doing the like to another: *Saul* would have his Armour-Bearer kill him; but it doth not follow that therefore he might kill his Armour-Bearer. But the Meaning in short is, that whatever we desire, according to the Laws of right Reason, of Equity and Charity, another should do unto us, that we should do unto them. And this being laid down as the Limitation of the Rule, it was propos'd as the chief Intention and great Advantage of the Rule, *that in all our Intercourse with our Neighbour we should change Persons with him, put*



ourselves in his Stead, and then act towards him, as we would desire he should act towards us, was he in our Place and we in his. We should saith *Laëtantius*, in *allis hominibus nos ipsos cogitare, in nobis alios*, consider ourselves in those we have to do with, and in ourselves consider others. In short, the great Design of the Rule is to exclude Selfishness in our Transactions with others, and Treatment of them; and 'tis admirably contriv'd for that Purpose, as it requires a Commutation, or change of Persons with them. Every Man is tender of his own Interest, would not be deprived of what is due to him, neglected, injur'd, or any way wrong'd; according to this Rule he is oblig'd to treat others with the like Tendernefs and Equity he himself would be treated; And how happy a World would it be, what a glorious Change would it introduce among us, was this Precept made the Measure of our acting! Oh! that all who heard these Things, and had this admirable Rule set before them, might transcribe and live in it. Lord, write it upon my Hert; may I never forget it!

The Minister proceeded to consider the Extent of the Rule. And here a great many Cases were mention'd, wherein we should apply it, behaving towards others, as we would desire they should behave towards us, were they in our, and we in their Circumstances; particularly Persons, in their respective Relations, should conduct themselves according to this Rule; as Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants, Ministers and People, Magistrates and Subjects. Did Persons retire into their own Breasts, and impartially examine what 'tis they expect from their respective Relatives, and perform the same to them, it would remove many Complaints, redress many Grievances, and model their Behaviour very much to their mutual Comfort and Advantage. We should act by this Rule in judging others: Some have  
thought

thought the Rule has special Reference to that Matter, connecting this with the first Verse of the Chapter. We should not judge rashly and severely, spying and magnifying the Mote in our Brother's Eye; but let Equity hold the Ballance, when we are weighing the Actions of our Neighbours; and in the mean Time Charity should cast in as many Grains of Allowance as the Nature of the Thing, and as the Standard and Touchstone of the Gospel will admit of. To make Faults where there are none, or aggravate such as are real, is the Property of a very ill Nature, shews Envy, Malice, &c. and is directly contrary to the great Law of Charity, 1 Cor. xiii. 4. 7. and every one feels in himself how contrary 'tis to the Rule in the Text: We should take it ill to have our Words and Actions appear with a Malicious Gloſs, and be commented upon with an uncharitable Rigour; and consequently we should not mete this Measure to others.

The Rule must accompany us through all our Conversation concerning others; direct us how to treat their Character and Actions (*viz.*) as we would be treated ourselves: Some take a Pleasure in throwing Dirt; if they can pick up any thing to the Disadvantage of another, away they run with it through the Town, and are as *Solomon* speaks, a Maul, a Sword, and a sharp Arrow, *Prov.* xxvii. 18. they wound the good Name of their Neighbour, batter down his Reputation, and shoot at him privily. Sometimes they do this more openly, by downright Calumny; sometimes by invidious Insinuations. How little Regard they have to the Rule in the Text, every one may observe. Would Persons put themselves in the Stead of their Neighbour, it would stop their Mouth, or give another Turn to their Discourse: And as this Rule should be observ'd in our Converse towards others, so in our Converse *with* them, and restrain us from an haugh-

ty, proud, insulting Carriage: We don't like this ourselves; would not have our Infirmities exposed, and Weaknesses triumphed over; would not be despised and made little; well, the same Tenderness we have for ourselves, we should express towards others. The Rule also extends to the forgiving Injuries, and would be of excellent Use here, if duly applied: How often do we need the Charity of our Brethren? This or that Person has offended us, we are implacable, no After-carriage can restore them to your Friendship; there needs no more to shame us out of this unchristian Rigour of Temper, than to reflect on our Rule. Should God deal so with us, we were lost for ever; and should Man deal so with us, the Consequence would be our Exclusion from Society, or at least from the Comforts of it. The same Rule is to be observed in all the Cases of Necessity, Misery and Distress, in which at any time we may find our Brethren: We should change Persons with them, put our selves in their Stead, and thence learn how to behave towards them: We should sometimes in our Thoughts step down into the Circumstances of the most indigent, that we may the better learn the Force of their Oratory, *hear the cry of the Poor*. Though indeed all those Cries should be prevented; but while 'tis not so, the Rule in the Text will teach us some Regard to them. were we melancholly and distress'd in Spirit, Widows, Orphans, sick and in Prison, how would we expect others should treat us, without Bowels and Compassion, a kind Look, Word or Action? certainly not well. What we would justly desire for ourselves in such Circumstances, we are to do towards others who are in them.

It was observed that the Rule extends to that great Right of human Nature, every Man's judging



ing for himself in Matters of Religion. Every one here is ready to complain of Impositions, and thinks himself exceedingly injur'd by them; and yet how common is it for him that judgeth, and condemneth another, to do the same Thing. If it be said Men ought to judge right, I answer, every one thinks he doth so, and 'tis impossible he should think otherwise: So that whoever imposes his Sentiments upon another, without convincing him of the Truth of them, violates the most fundamental Right of Conscience, is unjust in the highest Degree, and tramples the Maxim in the Text under Foot: The Rule should take Place in all Matters of Trust committed to us; as in Secrets, the Execution of Wills, and the like. No Man would herein be betray'd; a Breach of Trust in these Things is often of the worst Consequence, and what we would abhor in others; and therefore should never be guilty of, ourselves. Lastly, the Rule was recommended as of eminent Use in Traffick, in buying and selling. Here the Laws of commutative Justice are to be observ'd, therefore would be *Ratio dati & accepti*; Equality must be kept between Buyer and Seller; the Seller is to receive a moderate Gain, and the Buyer a just Pennyworth. Something was offered to state this Equality, and the Rule in the Text apply'd to the Case, viz. that the Buyer and Seller should change Persons, each put himself in the other's Place, and do as he would reasonably desire to be done by: Such a Commutation would go far to cure the Selfishness that is the Bane of Commerce, and really be the best Casuist in these Matters. I would not be injur'd by an ill Commodity, or any exorbitant Price; was I a Buyer, the same Equity (that my Conscience necessarily approves) should govern me when I am a Seller. *Caveat Emptor*, is a



Rule I can't reconcile to the Bible; the Meaning is let the Buyer look about him, 'tis his own Fault if he be cheated; whereas it may be more my Fault than his: I should not suffer him to cheat himself, and resolve he should not be cheated by me. This the Laws of Justice and Equity require, and if I act otherwise, Conscience must tell me I forget the Rule of our Saviour, and do as I would not be done by.

O my Soul! apply and endeavour to improve what thou hast read; study this Rule, and let it govern thee in all thy Correspondance with thy Neighbour; bewail past Neglects, and labour for a more exact Compliance with it for the future: Consider the Excellency and Importance of the Rule. 'Tis said of the Emperor *Severus*, that he was so much pleased with the Sentence of the Gospel, that he caused it to be inscrib'd over the Gates of the Palace; and so highly did he honour the Author that he built a Temple to him, added him to the Number of his Gods: And when he saw any of his Soldiers committing Spoils in the Fields of others he would reprove them, quoting this divine Passage against them; *Wouldst thou have this done in thy Field, which thou dost in the Field of others?* But whether the Emperor said such Things, and practis'd accordingly, or not, the Equity of the Rule is undeniable, and indeed self-evident; Nature teaches it, Scripture teaches it, the Son of God himself teaches it; not only as having Equity in it but as being the Test of Equity, and comprizing in its self the Substance of it all Equity. O my Soul! consider the Sacredness of this Rule, thou canst not violate it without the Reproach of thy own Conscience, as a Man, and contradicting thy Profession as a Christian. No Pretences to Faith, no Zeal in the Forms of Worship will avail any one,

one that is prevailingly selfish, unjust and oppressive towards others. If I neglect the great essential Laws of natural and revealed Religion, I am but an Hypocrite, whatever disguise of Sanctity I may appear in. As he that loves fulfilleth the Law; so he that loveth not, that neglects this Maxim of Justice and Love, violates the Law of it; he tramples under Foot the whole Law and Prophets at once: And I would farther consider, that the gross notorious Violation of this Rule is often remarkably punish'd in this World.

*Judge not that ye be not judged; for with what Measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again,* Matt. 7. 12.

The severe Censurer, the Backbiter and Slanderer, that delights in Scandal, and can scarce let any one pass without a lash of his Tongue, and without throwing out some of his Poison of Asps, is generally paid in his own Coin; others use the same Freedom with his Reputation, as he hath done with theirs: And the same may be done in other Instances, wherein Persons cast this sacred Rule of Commerce behind their Back. *Let no Man, saith the Apostle, go beyond, or defraud his Brother in any Thing, for God is the avenger of all such,* 1 Thess. 4: 6. Sometimes the Vengeance is taken in this World; Providence retaliates the Crime, punishes it in Kind, letting loose the Passions of others upon us in the same way ours work'd towards them. *When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when thou hast made an End to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee,* Isa. 33. 1. Judges 1. 6, 7.

*Adonibezek* had his Cruelty return'd into his own Bosom. Many such Instances there are in present Providence; thousands that we do not understand, and can't expound. However, should the Punishment be deferr'd, it will come; if Men be not the Instruments of GOD's Wrath now, he'll

take the Work into his own Hand hereafter. *God is the Revenger of all such*, and will execute Vengeance sooner or latter.

O my God! teach me thy Statutes; this great Rule particularly of my Lord and Master. I am ashamed to think how much I have neglected it; how apt I have been to weigh myself and Neighbour in different Ballances; that I have had no more Regard to this Excellent Precept, that comes recommended to me by the highest Authority, and stands approv'd by my own Conscience. Lord, forgive my Selfishness, my Injustice in Words and Actions, and in all my Carriage † towards my Neighbours.

I would resolve for the future, by thy Grace, to exercise more Love and Benevolence towards Mankind to mortify my self, to put off that undue

---

† I don't expect, that the most serious and devout should review the Sermons they hear, as largely and according to this Specimen; much less that they should thus review every Sermon. What I suppose, is, that sometimes the Sermons heard should be review'd, with such Remarks as the Subject of the Discourse may require. Such as take Notes may do it more fully and distinctly; others, if they design it, and accordingly attend to what they hear, may be able from their Memory to furnish proper Matter for such an Exercise. If they retain only the general Method, the main Scope of the Discourse, and some particular Heads with such Passages as they find themselves most nearly concern'd in, it may be sufficient for the Purpose. And I am mistaken, if a few Sermons thus us'd, thus recollected, applied and preach'd over in private, don't prove of more Advantage than many hundreds heard in the careless manner that is usual, (*i. e.*) are never thought of afterwards, but the Hearer and Preacher have done together. One half Hour or Hour once or twice a Week (and as often as any thing occurs from the Pulpit that calls for it) thus employ'd, would turn to good Account, and gloriously quit the Cost; not only help Persons to hear with more Attention, but Profit more by what they hear.

Self-

Self-love, that has been the Occasion of so much Injury to others, and Dishonour to my Profession. O! that I may love my Neighbour as myself.

I would resolve to set this Rule constantly before me in my Intercourse with Mankind; consider myself in them, and offer them nothing I should not like myself; or, according to the Laws of impartial Reason and Equity, I could object against: I would bind it about my Neck, write it on the Posts of my House, my Shop, or rather beg that God would write it on the Table of my Heart.

In any doubtful Actions, wherein I am to play the Casuist, I would have Recourse to this Rule for my Help in the Decision. If I am questioning whether this or that be just and charitable to my Neighbour, I desire presently to substitute myself in his stead, and then make a Judgment. Lord, pour out upon me more of the Spirit of Grace and Love: May I add to my Faith all other Graces, and among the rest *brotherly Kindness and Charity*; the Grace of Heaven, *which never faileth*. And as I am preparing for that State, may I have in greater Abundance the Temper that suits it. In the mean Time, may I walk in Uprightness and Love, and exercise myself daily unto this, to have a Conscience void of Offence towards God and towards Man.

---

Thursday Night, Six a-Clock.

THIS Day I attended the Lecture in the usual Course, and heard a Sermon from the Text, *Specimen Twelfth.*  
 1 Pet. ii. 1. *Laying aside all Envy*— In the Discourse several Things were offer'd, that I thought myself not a little concern'd in, and therefore desire



fire to take this Opportunity to review what I can remember, and preach it over again to myself. Lord grant me the Spirit of Light, and Life from above.

(1) It was propos'd to explain the Sin, shew wherein it consists; and it was represented as a secret Grudge and Displeasure at the Good of another: Where the Object was consider'd, viz. The Good of another, any Advantages another has, supposed or real, and that either above us, or in common with us; and envy sometimes, tho' he have it in a lower Degree than what we have, or imagine we have. Any supposed Excellency is Object of Envy; as Wealth and outward Prosperity. Esteem Honour, Favour, Parts, Learning, good Works, nay even Grace and Favour with God affords Matter for this Corruption to Work upon, so vile is it. As to the Act it lies in a secret Displeasure, an inward Grudge. The Scripture calls it an *Evil Eye*.

Prov. 3.

31.

Isa. 1. 11

13.

Psf. 73. 1.

Acts 7. 9.

Psf. 106.

16.

Matt. 27.

18.

Ecclef. 4.

4.

Gen. 4. 5.

Matt. 20.

15.

(2) Some Observations were made concerning this Sin; as that 'tis what we are all prone to: 'Tis a Distemper of our Nature, *James* iv. 5. *Vidi pavulum zelantem*, &c. saith St. *Austin*, I have seen a little Child look pale with Envy. 'Tis generally found, and more strongly worketh betwixt Persons that have something of Equality. " Envy lies " most between Beings of the same Nature. We " don't envy Brutes, tho' they exceed us in many " Respects, not inconsiderable. No Man is displeas'd " with a Bird, because she can flie, and he can't: " We are not offended with the Strength of an Elephant or Swiftness of an Horse; the Reason is, " these are all foreign Commodities, not look'd on " as the Growth of our Soil, which makes them nei- " ther

“ ther expected nor desir’d, and that’s enough to  
 “ lay our Envy asleep. nor do we envy the higher  
 “ Condition of the Angels; the Reason is partly,  
 “ that the Angels are seldom seen: Their Grandeur  
 “ lies hid; but chiefly, the Model of our Nature  
 “ was drawn less than that of the Angels; and  
 “ therefore, tho’ we may admire them, we don’t  
 “ envy them: We don’t think ourselves diminish’d  
 “ and reflected on, when their superior Excellency  
 “ is acknowledg’d.” Envy is between Creatures  
 of the same common Nature; between Men and  
 Men, and not between Men and Brutes, or be-  
 tween Men and Angels; nor indeed doth it obtain  
 so ordinarily and in so great Degree, where there is  
 the utmost Inequality and Distance among Crea-  
 tures of the same Nature. It works most where  
 there is something of Equality; as between Persons  
 of the same Age, Birth and Education; between  
 Persons of the same Calling and Employment  
 Scholars envy Scholars, Soldiers envy Soldiers, &c.  
 and in all Cases where there is ill Will, Enmity  
 and Animosity, the Envy is more easily excited.

It was observ’d that it has its rise from Pride;  
 this is the true Spring and Cause of it. Men would  
 shine alone, or at least can’t bear that others should  
 outshine or eclipse them. They are their own I-  
 dols, and would have all the Infense offered unto  
 them. It was observ’d that this Vice variously dis-  
 covers itself: ’Tis discover’d to a Man’s self secret-  
 ly, by the Uneasiness it gives him: ’Tis Rottenness  
 to the Bones, the Saw of the Mind, as the Orator  
 calls it; it doth, as it were, tear the Heart, prey  
 upon the Spirits, and destroy the Comfort of every  
 Enjoyment, It discovers it self in a sort of *Gen. 4. 5,*  
 Triumph at the Falls, Dishonours, Diminutions,<sup>7.</sup>  
 and any sort of Miseries of another; in con-  
 cealing from others what tends to their Advan-  
 tage:

tage. Envy hides its Talents, that others may not partake of the Honour and Comfort of them. It discovers it self in Defamation, nibbling at the Reputation of those we envy, and endeavouring to blast it; we are grieved at their good and their several Advantages, wish them lower, and therefore attempt to bring them lower.

(3) The Evil of it was next display'd. 'Tis reckon'd among *the Works of the Flesh, Adultery, Fornication, Uncleannefs, Idolatry, &c.* 'Tis represented as the Character of the Unregenerate. 'Tis the greatest Enemy to Peace, the Peace of a Man's own Mind: 'Tis a constant Torture within as every one experiences, that is under the Power of it; and 'tis no less an Enemy to the Peace of Society, hence it is so commonly join'd with Strife and the like in the sacred Scripture, as *Rom. i. 29. xxiii. 13. Gal. v. 20.* 'Tis often impetuous and carries Persons to the greatest Excesses of Rage. Nothing would satisfy *Cain's* Envy, but the Blood of his Brother; and for the same Principle it was that *Saul* attempted *David's* Life. 'Tis an Affront to God, as it carries in it a Censure of his Providence in his Distributions: It disputes his Sovereignty; will not suffer him to do what he will with his own, and arraigns his Wisdom, as if he had plac'd his Favours wrong, and made an unwise Disposal of them.

*Gal. 5. 25, 26. It grieves the Spirit of God.* 'Tis the most unreasonable and absurd of all Vices; it sickens at the Sight of Health, and languishes over Prosperity. The Philosopher, to express his Detestation of it, wishes the envious Man more Eyes and Ears than others, that he might be tormented by seeing and hearing of other Mens Happiness. In a Word, 'tis the Sin of the Devil, his very Image and Nature. He could not behold the Felicity of our first,

first Parents in Paradise without attempting to ruin it ; and from the same spiteful mischievous Nature he acts in all the Plots he has been carrying on against Mankind ever since.

And O my Soul ! what Reason have I to be humbled and even abhor myself, that I am polluted, so far polluted with this----what shall I call it? Wickedness, Vileness, Diabolism. Justly might God send me to Hell, the Place of Envy and Malice. O ! for Mercy, Lord, forgive my exceeding Sinfulness. *Purge me with Hyssop, and I shall be clean, wash me and I shall be whiter than Snow ; cleanse me from all my Filthiness, both of Flesh and of Spirit.*

Three Things I would resolve upon, and seriously endeavour. To get Pride mortify'd: That is the Root of Bitterness, from whence this, and indeed most other of my evils spring. To get my Charity more encreas'd : I would take pleasure in the Welfare of my Neighbour ; be always ready to give him his just Praise ; study to promote his Happiness and Comforts as my own ; never think myself lessen'd by his Advantages and Enjoyments, but take occasion from the Bounty of Heaven to him, to magnify the Giver, and rejoice with the Receiver. I would endeavour to pray down more of the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Love, to mortify this and all other my Corruptions. Lord look upon me in Mercy. How like Hell has Sin made poor apostate Man ! Nothing but thy Grace can raise us to Heaven ; can give us the Temper of Heaven, and fit us for the Element of Goodness and Love. Lord grant me thy Spirit, to correct and heal my Nature ; make me more like thyself. *God is Love, and he that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God, and God is him.*

LORD's



## LORDS-DAY Night Five a Clock.

Specimen  
Thir-  
teenth

THE Text to Day was *Ja. iv. 11. Speak not Evil one of another Brethren.* Several Things in the Sermon came close to my Conscience, and gave me Occasion to say with *Pharaoh's Butler, I remember my Fault this Day.* Great Reason I have to reflect upon, and censure my Infirmities. Blessed be God for his good Word, and for a Gospel-Ministry: I find the Truth of the Character of Holy Scripture, *that 'tis profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, and for Instruction in Righteousness*; and I find it more so, as open'd and apply'd by Ministers. Lord, give them the Tongue of the Learned, help them rightly to divide the Word of Truth. I am thankful for the Advantage I found in attending upon this Institution this Day; and as I saw my self in the Glass of the Word, I would again hold the Glass before the Eye of my Soul, and therein take a farther View of myself. Lord, search me and try me, make thy Word quick and powerful, effectually profitable for my *Correction.*

The Text was criticis'd upon, and in part explain'd by the other Text, *Tit. iii. 2. Put them in mind to speak Evil of no Man*; where it was noted, the Word in the Greek signifies *to blaspheme, i. e. to wound or hurt the Reputation or Fame*; so that the Sense is, that we are not to speak to the Disadvantage or Prejudice of another; or as the Word in the present Text imports, *Speak against one another.* I shall recollect some things that were said according to the Method of the Discourse. (1) It was suggested, that 'tis not all speaking evil of another that is here condemn'd. (2) It was inquir'd what is that speaking evil forbid, and when Persons

sons are guilty of it. (3) The Causes of it were also enquir'd into. (4) Some Arguments were offer'd against it.

(1) It was suggested, that 'tis not all speaking evil of another that is here condemn'd. 'Tis sometimes so far from being a Sin to do this, that 'tis a great Duty: Magistrates may lay open the Crimes of such as are arraign'd before them. Private Persons, as Witnesses, may declare the Evil they know of others; and not to do it in some Cases, would involve them in Guilt, And the like may be *Lev. 5. 11* said in Cases of more private Discipline; that of particular Churches and Families. The Household of *Cloe* inform'd the Apostle of the Contentions and Schisms of the *Corinthians*, *Jo-1 Cor. 1. 11* *sep* inform'd his Father of the Miscarriages of his Brethren, The People brought to *Eli* an *Gen. 37. 2* Account of the Wickedness of his Sons, Nor *1 Sam. 2. 23* doth it seem there was any Fault in all this, any sinful evil speaking. The Execution of publick Justice, the Safety of the Community, the Order and Discipline of Families and Churches, allow and require this Liberty, that some Persons speak Evil of others, *i. e.* lay their Faults before such as are concern'd to animadvert upon them. Farther, it is not lawful to take notice and speak of publick and notorious Scandals. When Persons declare their Sin as *Sodom*, 'tis no Offence against this Rule to mention it, if it be only to shew an Abhorrence of it. Nor is it any Fault in *Historians*, impartially to relate the grosser Miscarriages of those they are concern'd with, especially of Persons in publick Stations. Many valuable Ends may be serv'd hereby; a Mark of Infamy set upon Crimes that deserve it; Caution administred to others, &c. 'Tis observable that inspired *Historians* leave on Record the Failings of some of the greatest and best of

of Men; as of *Noah, Lot, Moses, Aaron, David, Solomon, Peter*, and others. It may sometimes be lawful to speak of the Evil we know of others, for the Caution of our Friends; as to prevent prejudicial Alliances, dangerous Trusts or Intimacies; tho' here, to be sure, we are not to aggravate Faults, make every Mote a Beam, ruin any one's Character *at once and for ever*, because of some Blemish we imagin'd or found in it; much less are we to invent Faults, or suppose them, without sufficient Evidence. The same Liberty is allowable when the speaking evil of another is necessary to our own Vindication, or the Vindication of any innocent Person; and there are many Cases in which it may be necessary: The Guilty must be laid open, or the Innocent will suffer. It was added in the last Place, it may not be altogether unwarrantable, nor fall under the Reproof of this Text, to speak of the Faults of others, tho' none of the foremention'd Ends can be serv'd by it. Intimate Friends may mention the Failings of their Neighbours and Brethren, to bewail them and lament them, especially if it be done with a charitable Design, and Attempt of correcting them. If a Person suffer by the Fault of another, by Unkindness, Injustice and ill Carriage, it may be allowable to communicate such Grievances to a Friend for their Advice and Counsel; and even their Compassion and Sympathy may afford some little Relief, if they can do nothing else for us: And in these Cases it may not be lawful to speak evil of another; the Text, it was suppos'd, doth not respect such speaking of evil.

And this being premis'd, it was inquir'd, (2) what the evil speaking, here condemned, is, and when Persons may be said to be guilty of it. (1) They are guilty in the grossest manner, when they

they forge Evil of others, and publish it to their Hurt. This is downright malicious Calumny, and yet has been, and is too common. *Abab* found Mat. 511. Sons of *Belial* to witness against *Naboth*, that he blasphem'd God and the King. Many a one has had Reason to complain with the Psalmist, *False Witnesses did rise up; they laid to my Charge Things that I knew not.* 1 Kings 21: 13. (2) Persons are guilty of this Sin when they speak evil of another, without Evidence that 'tis true; tho' we don't know it to be false, yet if we don't know it to be true, 'tis a great Fault. And this is aggravated, when we are forward to believe and take up the Reproach, and to spread it; when we are pleas'd with the Ill we are propagating, especially if it be very much to the Prejudice of our Neighbour; and in the mean time whilst we spread the ill Story, we ourselves suspect the Truth of it. Hast thou, O my Soul, been herein guilty? If so, Tears are but a low Expression of the Resentment that is due. (3) We may be chargeable with the Sin of evil speaking, even when the Evil we speak of another we know to be true; as when we give it as bad a Turn as possible, leave out every Circumstance that might in part excuse or extenuate the Evil; when it can serve no good End, and we have no Call to speak the ill things of another we are privy to; and what Reason have I here to cry *Guilty, Guilty!* to fall on my Face and abhor myself? Tho' I dare not invent a Scandal, forge ill, and charge on my Neighbour, yet how often have I unnecessarily publish'd the Ill I know of him? And has not Ill-will to him, Malice, Envy and the like wicked Principle, prompted me to this uncharitable Office! Lord have Mercy upon me; *wash me thoroughly from mine Iniquity, and cleanse me from my Sin.* It was observ'd. (4) that this Ini-



Envy is sometimes committed by Innuendo's and Insinuations. Have you heard, saith the Back-biter, any thing of such a Person? I am not willing to believe it; don't care for speaking: Now I grant there may be little Fault in all this: They may be Words of Truth, Soberness and Charity, if the Person that speaks them has just Occasion to do it; but often all these smooth Things are said on purpose to disguise Malice, and wound the deeper, They first said they knew something of such a one very ill, and that they are unwilling to believe it, and yet would have others believe it, and leave them to suspect it to be much worse than it is. (5) 'Tis very common for Detractors and Calumniators, when they can't find fault with Persons Actions to censure their Principles: If this or that Thing be allow'd to be well done, they presently find something to sully it; if there had not, say they, been so much Pride, &c. in it-----Like the Devil, that could not object against *Job's* good Character, but then he insinuates, he was selfish, and an Hypocrite in all. In short, Persons of this Temper *will* have others naught, and therefore if they can't find Matter *without*, for the Spirit of Censure and Detraction to fasten upon, they enter *within*, judge in the dark and speak evil of Things they know not, nor can know. Lord, preserve me from this malicious Presumption; save me from every Degree of it, pardon my past Guilt. -----

*Job* 1. 9.

(3) The Causes and secret Springs of this Vice were laid open. In some it proceeds very much from a churlish dogged Temper: They love to throw Dirt, and bespatter; are constantly snarling at almost every body that comes in their Way, even when there is no special Enmity on their part, and no particular Provocation given them by any. It often

often proceeds from Resentment of Injuries, real or supposed. Hence that Admonition 1 *Pet.* iii. 8, 9. *Love as Brethren, be pitiful, be courteous, not rendring Evil for Evil, nor Railing for Railing, but contrary-wise Blessing.* To the same purpose, *Mat.* v. 44. if others rail, speak evil of us, or act ill towards us, we are apt this way to avenge ourselves. O! may I be on my Guard here; guard against ill Impressions from the Carriage of others, to the Diminution and Hurt of my Charity; if I suffer Wrath and Enmity in the Heart, Railing, Backbitting and Evil-speaking will follow, *Col.* iii. 8. It frequently has rise from Pride and Envy. The proud Man would shine alone, at least appear with some distinguish'd Lustre. He's ready to think all the good Things said of another, and all the Honours paid him, is so much loss to himself; and hence as he envies the Reputation of his Brother, he sets himself by a malevolent Tongue, to lessen and ruin it. He seeks to rise by the Depression, and shine by the Eclipse of others. Hellish Quality this! and yet, how prevailing? How common a Source of Detraction and evil speaking? It was remark'd that Bigottry, a blind Zeal in matters of Religion is a very common Cause of this Practice: Such is the Fury and real Fanaticism frequently, of Men of this Spirit, who are under the Influence of a warm Party-zeal; that none can differ from them, but they presently set them up as Enemies, and think it allowable to prosecute them as such: They are Heterodox, Hereticks, and all that's naught; and having made them thus vile in their own Imagination, they scruple not to represent them and treat them accordingly; hence Bitterness, Wrath, Clamour and evil speaking; hence a Course and Habit of Calumny, and that allow'd, and it may be gloried

ried in ; the pretended Zeal is suppos'd to hallow all these vile Passions.

O my Soul ! endeavour a greater Dread of this Sin (evil speaking) a more noted Abhorrence of it : Improve what has been said to this purpose this Day. It was observ'd that 'tis a very common Failing of good Men ; such as make Conscience of other gross Sins, are more easily surpriz'd into this. It was not altogether without Reason, that a Father (*St. Jerom*) calls it one of the last Snares of the Devil. O ! may I be convinc'd of the Evil of it. 'Tis an high Instance of Uncharitableness, and exceeding pernicious and hurtful. 'Tis hurtful to those of whom we speak evil, it destroys (so far) their Reputation ; 'tis hurtful to those to whom we speak, it destroys their Charity ; 'tis hurtful to our selves, \* it destroys our Peace, *grieves the Spirit of God, &c. Eph. iv. 30, 31, 32.* 'Tis an high Offence against God, and Contempt of his Authority ; hence that of the Apostle, *1 Jam. iv. 11. He that speaketh evil of another, speaketh evil of the Law ;* he undervalues it, tramples upon it, as worthy of no Regard, not fit to prescribe to him ; he despiseth the Commandment of the Lord to *do evil in his Sight.* O ! my Soul, don't extenuate this Crime, and because 'tis a common Sin, think 'tis no Sin, or a little one. It has a great deal of Malignity in it ; so the Scripture represents it, placing it among the worst, the most scandalous Iniquities, and make it the Character of the worst Men, *Rom. i. 29, 30. 2 Cor. xii. 20. Eph. iv. 31. 1 Cor. v. 11.* O ! may I consider this, and now say (I have great Reason to say it, Lord, help me by thy Grace) *that I will take heed to my Way, that I offend not with my Tongue.* I would take up a Resolution of more Caution for the future.

How

\* Calumniator is said by the Hebrew Doctors to speak with a threefold Tongue, because he hurterh three therewith; himself by Sin, his neighbour whom he backbiteth, and the Receiver of his Tale, whom he corrupteth

How happy should I think myself, could I say with an eminent Minister: I bless God, saith he, I have not given any Man's Reputation a secret Wound behind his Back for many Years. Lord, teach me thy Statutes, guide me in thy Truth and teach me.

Two or three Things I would resolve upon, touching my future Conduct: Not unnecessarily and so much as is common, make others the Subject of my Conversation; nor need this make a Vacuity in Discourse, I may find enough to talk of, without talking constantly of others. As God, the Works of God, daily Providences, the Bible, myself- my Failings, Wants, Mercies; the Necessities and Miseries of others, the News, &c. and indeed almost any thing, rather than my Neighbour, when I bring him upon the Stage only to kick him or lash him. I would resolve, when I speak of others, to speak all the good I can of them; not that we are to call Evil Good, palliate, excuse, much less plead for, and vindicate downright Sin and Wickedness: When I am call'd to speak of very ill Men, and very ill Things, it may be fit to speak justly of them, and shew my Dislike; but I would ordinarily keep off this Subject, and when I speak of others, speak as much good of them as I can, especially when I am speaking of good Men, chusing to enlarge on their Excellencies, and touch their Faults more sparingly. I would resolve to think as well of my Neighbour as I can; would not hearken to Whisperers, Backbiters, nor give way to evil Surmises, but maintain all the Esteem I can for others, and cherish the Charity that believeth all things, and hopeth all things. Above all, I would see that I never take Pleasure in thinking or speaking Evil of others. If it once be grievous to me to think of and hear



of the ill Things of others, it will be grievous to me to speak of them, and there will need little else to restrain me from speaking of them unseasonably, unnecessarily, and to their Hurt. Lord, shed abroad the Love of my Neighbour in my Heart: May I love him as myself; forgive my many and great Miscarriages in this Instance, and wash me thoroughly from mine Iniquity. Purge the Fountain, cleanse me from all Filthiness of the Spirit; grant me a pure and charitable Heart, and I shall have a pure Lip and charitable Tongue.

---

Thursday Night, 8 a-Clock.

Specimen  
Fourteen.

Rom. 12.  
19.  
1 Thes. 5.  
15.

**I**n this Day heard a Sermon about forgiving one another. The Text was *Mark xi. 25. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any.* I don't pretend to remember all the Particulars of the Sermon. I have before heard and read many things on the like Subject, and to the like Purpose. But alas! how defective in this, as well as other Duties? I need, I am sure, to have my Mind stir'd up by way of Remembrance. Lord, keep these Things upon the Imagination of the Thoughts of my Heart for ever. In the Explication of the Duty in the Text, *forgiving others*, when we have any Act against them, it was hinted that it implies we don't seek Revenge, nor endeavour to retaliate the Injury. Nor are we to desire that God should take Vengeance, like *Brutus*, who when he could not have his Will on his Enemy, cried out passionately to *Jupiter* to fall upon him. O! may I stand clear in this Matter. If I forgive mine Enemy, I must wish him well; neither hurt him myself, nor desire his Hurt. I am not bound to take him for a Friend,

Friend, and make him my Confident; but I am to wish his good, rejoice in his good, and be ready to do him any good Office.

Among many other Things that were offer'd in the Progress of the Discourse, a great deal of suitable Advice that was given, two or three Particulars I desire to take special notice of; O may I never forget them! (1) That we should endeavour to heap Coals of Fire upon the Head of our Enemies, subdue them with Kindness, overcoming evil with good. It was a noble Reply of a Philosopher to an angry enraged Man: *Let me die, saith he, if I be not reveng'd on him*: Let me die, reply'd the Philosopher, if I don't make him my Friend. (2) The Example of one was mention'd and recommended, as it well deserv'd, that used to keep a List of such as had injur'd him, that he might wait an Opportunity of doing them good. Lord, grant me this Charity, I shall think myself happier and richer in it, than in all the Treasure of both Hemispheres. (3) It was suggested we should with the greatest Care watch our own Spirits (and attend to the Duty of forgiving others) under special Provocations and Trials: As when our most friendly Designs and kindest Endeavours are requited with ill Nature, Reproach and all manner of ill Offices; and there being something of this in my own Case at present, I would look upon myself as more than ordinarily concern'd to mind the Admonition. Lord, the Preparation of the Heart is from thee, impress and form it to a Correspondence with my Duty. I would particularly resolve to insert the Name of the Person, I have so much Reason to complain of for a most unjust and ungrateful Carriage, in the List of Offenders, whom I have to forgive, and who are to be the Objects of my Charity and Kindness, as

Opportunity offers. I would resolve not to mention the Provocation and the Aggravations of it *unnecessarily*; and no farther than my own Vindication, and the Cause of Justice and Truth requires. I would resolve daily to remember this Offender in my Prayers, to recommend him to the divine Blessing, Teaching Mercy and Forgiveness; hereby I shall not only exercise but increase my Charity, and take a likely Means to prevent all Bitterness, Rancour and Malice of Mind. Lord, be thou my Instructor. Grant a Blessing to thy Word, and to thy Ministry, and make my Heart upright before thee, and sound in thy Statues. Amen, and Amen †.

---

New-year's Day, 6 a-Clock in the Morning.

*Specimen  
Fifteen.*

**I**T having pleas'd God, in whose Hand my Breath is, and whose are all my Ways to bring me to the Beginning of another Year, I desire to employ myself in such Devotion, as is suitable to the present Circumstances of Time, to review the State of Things with me the last Year, and my Conduct in it; to state Accounts between God

---

† I am persuaded that a few Sermons heard in this Manner, with such Reflection afterwards, and Self-Application, will turn to a better Account (as before intimated) than a thousand heard in the way that I am afraid is common; when we are like a Man that beholds his natural Face in a Glass, and goeth away and forgeteth what manner of Man he was; and therefore can't but earnestly recommend this Method to the Reader. I should have added more Examples upon other Subjects, but have already far exceeded the Bounds intended upon the Head of Meditation, and therefore must forbear.

and

and my Soul, at the Beginning of this Year, and to lay down Measures for my Behaviour in it, and thro' it, if it please God to spare me this Year also. In the Review of the last Year, I find a great many Mercies to bless God for : Mercy and Goodness has follow'd me all the Year, fill'd up every Month, Week and Day of it. God has graciously preserv'd an unprofitable, very low, mean and worthless Life ; a Providence I ought to be the more affected with, since it has been a Year of so great Mortality ; many have fallen at my Side, many at my right Hand, but the Arrow of Death has not come near me. Persons of various Characters and Conditions, of every Age, young and old, many of my particular Acquaintance, has this last Year gone into Eternity ; the pious, judicious, useful Mr.--- the hopeful young Mr.----and yet I am left a poor Cumberground ! Lord, what shall I render ? I would chiefly value Life as 'tis a Seed-time for Eternity. If I shall have another Year, may I employ it well, and for Eternity ! And the same kind Providence has extended to mine also ; he has preserv'd my Family in Health in the midst of Sicknefs and Death : A good Measure of Prosperity has attended me in my outward Affairs, and in the Management of my Calling. I escaped a very great Blow in my Concern with----- which would very much have incumber'd and straitned me, had not a kind Providence prevented, which I have Reason to think it did, by a special Interposition in my Behalf. Some special spiritual Blessings I have to recount this Year, some Notice I have taken of them in my Diary, and desire now to revive the Memory of them. I have Reason to hope good Impressions have been made upon the Heart of my ----, a Mercy I have often sought with strong Crying and Tears. I

met



met with many favourable Providences in my Journey to----- I heard a Sermon by Mr. ----- from *Matt. xxv. 33.* which I hope I receiv'd much Advantage from. I remember I was not only affected when I heard it, but it sent me to my Knees----- I have reason to hope God made me of some Use to----- Lord, I rejoice in thy Favours towards me; make me more attentive, zealous and watchful; more solicitous to receive and do good. I have enjoy'd the Means of Grace, Sabbaths, Sermons, Sacraments, in an uninterrupted Course, not without Refreshments and Consolations (alas! that they have been so little and so seldom) which I value more than all the World. I have had some comfortable Hours upon my Knees, and hope God has granted me somewhat more of the Spirit of Grace and Supplication than heretofore I had experienced. I have had some remarkable Answers of Prayer this Year, particularly upon occasion of-----, as recorded in my Diary. I would humbly hope I have made some Advances in Religion; have gain'd some Victory over a Sin that easily besets me, and that I have often bewail'd. And I desire never to forget the Support, Conduct and Comfort I had under a very peculiar Trial and Exercise I met with this Year in the Affair of----- Lord, what shall I render? I have no Words big and strong enough to express the Sense I ought to have, and hope I have of thy Bounty, Condescension and Grace. I find myself often, of late, when about such Work, *praising God*, inclin'd to refer it to Eternity; not but I would be attempting something, and do my best now: but *then*, and not before, shall I praise him, truly praise him. Lord, assist me in this Service; accept my poor Acknowledgments for the Series and Current of Mercies that has run through the last Year; accept the

the Sacrifice of a grateful Heart ; accept my Heart as the Sacrifice.

And oh ! how many the Sins of the last Year ? more than can be number'd, more than the Sand on the Sea Shoar. It might have been expected after such an History of Mercies, nothing could have offer'd on my Part, nothing to be set against them but Love, Gratitude, Devotion, and Obedience. But alas ! ----- what shall I say ? 'tis otherwise ; I have not render'd unto the Lord according to his Benefits. My Diary admonishes me of several Defects and Miscarriages, and Conscience admonishes me of more : But as I am conscious to myself of exceeding Disorders, and as the distinct Consideration of this Matter is of no small Consequence to me, I purpose, as soon as I can, as my Custom has been some Years past, to set a Day apart for Examination, Humiliation, Prayer, and Thanksgiving ; I shall only at present reflect on a few Things : The first is the Mispence of Time, precious, invaluable Time ; four of the twelve Months I slept away, which, though I don't mention as my Sin, yet ought be consider'd in the Computation of my Time. I had only eight Months to live *after a Sort* : And how much of this was squander'd away ? one half shall I reckon ? it may be more, in an undue, excessive Pursuit of the World ; in unnecessary, idle Visits, Company, Diversions, Amusements, &c. O my Soul ! bewail thy Inadvertency and Folly ; weep over lost Time. Is this Living for Eternity ? How have I trifled in the Duties of solemn Worship ; those of the Closet, Familiy and Assembly ? in my Converse with God and with Man ? How have I neglected my Watch ? How unguarded my Thoughts, my Affections, my Tongue ? Oh ! vile above Measure : Who ever trust in themselves that they are Righteous,

eous, surely I cannot. Lord, be merciful to me a Sinner. The more particular Examination of Conscience and Life, I refer to the solemn Day design'd; only two or three Particulars I shall take Notice of, which are so obvious, that they need no search. I still find Cause of the old Complaint of Pride and Vanity upon several Occasions: I hope I have got some Ground of it, but 'tis far from being mortified as it ought to be. I find myself yet addicted to, and often falling into the Sin of Backbiting and Detraction. I find myself the last Year more pleased with the World, and more keen in the Prosecution of it than I used to be. Oh! for Help against this Enemy. I find Thoughts of Dying not so grateful to me as sometimes they have been: There's a strange and unusual Damp upon my Mind when I look into the other World, and I know not how many foolish Questions arise about separate Spirits, where they are, what they do and enjoy. Once I could rejoyce at the Thoughts of putting off the Body: but now 'tis less so; though still I hope I can say, I would not part with my Prospects of another World for a thousand such Worlds as this: And I have, upon some Occasions of Trial, the last Year, wofully mismanaged, as noted in my Dairy. Lord, pity and relieve a poor distemper'd Creature, that desires now to lye at thy Foot, waiting for thy Salvation.

If God will please to afford me another Year, to the Beginning of which he has brought me, I purpose and resolve, by his Grace ----- to hold on in the Course of Religion I have for some time been engaged in, though with all the Improvement I can make. To watch against the Miscarriages of the last Year, the Temptations I suffer most by, the Snares I fell into. To pursue the good Rules I have heretofore set myself, and which I have  
found

found of no small Advantage; these I purpose to revize, add to, or change, as I see Occasion. I resolve to spend a Day, or part of a Day, once in --- Weeks, in Fasting or Thanksgiving, or both, as the State of my Affairs may direct and require: To lay by so much of my Estate and Income for charitable Uses the next Year. A few Years ago I fixed the Proportion I then thought proper; but as God has prosper'd me, and very much increased me since, I must increase my Charity; and therefore I determine to add this Year ---- l. to my former Disbursements this Way. I resolve to be more temperate in ----- I still find that I often fail in that Instance of Self-Government; not to throw away so much of my Time at -----: To set myself in the best Manner I can to mortify my --- which I may call my Iniquity; I have it down in my Diary, am levelling against it in every Fast, at every Sacrament, and almost in every Prayer; and yet have but imperfectly overcome it. Oh! for some farther Conquest this Year. Lord, help me by thy Grace! and as I am going to publick Worship, where I expect to hear a Sermon suitable to the Occasion, I would endeavour to make a good Improvement thereof. Lord, confirm my Purposes, strengthen me by thy Spirit, forgive the Sins of the last Year; may I not bring any of the Guilt of them into this? To thee I resign myself, all my Powers and Faculties; my Time, Life, Interests, all I have and am; accept me in the Beloved. *Amen, Amen.* †.

*Upon*

---

† I would have given more Examples to the same Purpose, but for fear of being tedious. I design this to recommend such Exercises, and as a Specimen of them: Though every one must consider his own Case, and vary his Confessions  
Thanksgivings,



*Upon returning Home from a Journey.**Sixteenth  
Specimen.*

AS I have met with a Variety of Providences in this Journey, in which I have spent so many Weeks; I desire now to review some of the more remarkable Occurrences of it, and address myself to God with suitable Acknowledgements.

A great many Mercies I have to reflect upon, besides such as may be reckon'd more *common*, which yet I would not overlook (as continued Health, Safety, Success in my Affairs, the Enjoyment of my Friends and the like). There are some special Favours that call for more particular Remarks: As my Deliverance at ----- Bridge: The Bridge was, a great Part of it, under Water by a Flood: The Horse slip't off the Causey, that led to it, with his hinder Feet, but so recover'd himself by a sudden Spring, that I know not which surpriz'd me most, the Greatness of my Danger, or of my Deliverance. I was ready to think I had Help from an invisible Hand, and could not but reflect, with Pleasure and Gratitude, upon that of the Psalmist; *He shall give his Angels Charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy Ways. They shall bear thee up in their Hands, lest thou dash thy Foot against a Stone*, Blessed be God for the Ministry of these benign, good Spirits! How many kind Offices do they do us, that we are not aware

*Psal. 91.  
11, 12.*


---

Thanksgivings, and Resolutions accordingly. I promise myself no truly serious Christian, that is in earnest in Religion, will object aginst this as a needless Labour. How much more Pains doth the Merchant take in Matters of far less Importance, in posting his Books, and settling his Accounts, and often at this time of the Year? And must the Children of this World, in every Thing, shame the Children of Light?

of

of ? unworthy I am of such Attendance ; but great is the Condescension of God to poor Creatures. I remember the Morning I was a little more particular than ordinary in my Requests (though I don't often, when journeying, omit the Matter) for the Protection of Angels, and had in the Morning before I rose, some agreeable Thoughts on that Subject : But whether any one or more of these blessed Spirits were present to my Assistance or not, the Circumstances of my Deliverance were such, that I am sure I ought not to overlook the Hand of God in it. *He deliver'd my Soul from Death, mine Eyes from Tears, and my Feet from Falling ;* may I walk before the Lord in the Land of the Living !

I hope I receiv'd some Advantage by the different Company and Conversation I was engag'd in, particularly at----- I find there are some conscientious Men, and savory Christians in most Places (though, alas ! too thin sown). And I find the same Infirmities among other People as among my nearer Neighbours : Folly, Vanity and Sin has overspread the World, and prevail every where ; the Observation of which, both heretofore and now has been of use to me ; as otherwise, so as it helps me to dispense with, and bear the Infirmities of those I am more constantly concern'd with. Wherever I go, as I carry my own Passions and Follies with me, I meet with Passions and Follies in others, as great as those I complain of at Home ; nor shall I be free of this Exercise, till I get among the good People of Heaven----- Lord, fit me for the blessed Day. As we are apt to think former times better than these, so to think good Men at a Distance, better than those of our Acquaintance ; one Reason is, the Infirmities of the one fall more under our Observation than the Infirmities of the other.

ther. I am thankful for the Admonition and Help I have had in this Journey by the Providence, and I hope Spirit of God, in some Points of Importance, particularly in this.

On Lord's Day, *June*----- I lay at----- I went to publick Worship ; and as I had Reason, from the Character of the Preacher, to expect something entertaining and instructive, I took some Notes of the Sermon ; and hope I shall not soon forget the warm and serious Admonition he gave his Auditory against loving the World ; he described a Lover of the World, offer'd several very pertinent Arguments against it. Many Things came close to my Conscience. When I return'd to my Inn, I retired into my Chamber, and found Matter for some serious Exercise, in which, if I mistake not, I had the comfortable Presence of God. Next Lord's-Day I had no Opportunity of going to Church, unless I spent a good Part of the Day on Horseback, and therefore I rather chose to keep my Inn, and make the best I could of my Time in private ; for I must own I can't approve the Way of those that make no Scruple to travel on the Lord's-Day, almost all of it, provided they can get to Church any Part of it, and hear a Sermon, or sleep whilst it's delivered ; I am afraid the Business of hearing a Sermon at such a Place, is mostly a Pretence, to excuse the true Design of Travelling, *viz.* to get forward on the Journey. I took the Opportunity of my Retirement that Day to think over the Affairs of my Journey ; spent some Time in Thanksgiving, Confession, Petition, and hope my Time was not altogether lost. On *Thursday* in the Forenoon, in my Road between----- Having no Company, I endeavour'd to employ my Thoughts upon serious Subjects, which God enabled me to do with some Profit and Comfort.

Comfort. When I came to ----- I had the Company of ----- a Relation I had not seen for some time. I found them in very comfortable Circumstances, and, which not a little pleas'd me, looking towards Heaven, as I hope. Blessed be God for this high Instance of his Favour; what shall I render? make deeper Impressions, &c. I am humbled and astonish'd to think I was no more useful in my Converse with 'em; I still want Skill and Zeal for such Applications to my Friends, for their spiritual Good, as would well become me. I am often seiz'd with a dumb Devil; however, I would hope I was not wholly useles. When I came Home I found all well ----- Thus Mercy and Goodness still follows me; has done so eminently in this Journey; *I will praise thee, O Lord, my God, with all my Heart, and will glorify the Name for evermore.*

Some Disappointment \* met with; particularly in my Concern with ----- and in ----- many Failings and Miscarriages I have to bewail. I can-

---

\* The various Occasions of Persons in their Journeys; and the different Business they are employed in, whether as Merchants, Ministers, &c. together with the great Variety there will be in their Cases, both with respect to Mercies, Disappointments, Miscarriages, and the like, must govern and direct the Manner of these Serious Exercises I am here setting an Example of. I don't expect the Company of any of the Scorners, so far thro' this Work; but if any of these Men of Sense and Wit (as they think themselves) should happen to take up this Book instead of the *Fortunate Mistress*, &c. and lighting upon these or the like Passages, should, as their Manner is, cry out of *Cant*, I would desire them not to speak Evil of Things they know not. The Christian, however, is so much convinc'd of his Duty herein (*acknowledging God in all his Ways*) and finds so much Comfort in such a Course, that I am perswaded he will not be laugh'd out of it. If this be to be enthusiastick and vile, he will resolve to be more vile still.

M m

not



not charge myself with Injustice towards my Neighbour ; with Lying, or any other gross Sin ; but have been far from acting with that Circumspection, Exactness, and *Decorum* that becomes a Christian ; there has been much Levity and Unprofitableness, and often Pride and Vanity in my Converse. I have not watch'd and kept my Garments, but walk'd nak'd, and they have seen my Shame. I met with some Men of loose Principles at---- who gave Vent to their Folly very freely, and foam'd out their own Shame ; but had not Presence of Mind, and Courage enough to rebuke them, and plead the Cause of Religion as I ought ; and alas ! how little Skill at best have I for such Service ? I took too much Liberty at my Inn at---- and went to Bed with little Acknowledgement of God. My Thoughts, when riding alone, were frequently vain, idle, and sometimes worse. I spent the greatest Part of one Lord's-Day foolishly and sinfully in Company----Forgive, Lord, my manifold Iniquity. I bless thee, Things are no worse with me, and for the Favours of thy Providence towards me through this Journey. O ! pardon the Sins of it. I purpose to act with more Caution for the future ; particularly when I have any Journey before me of Importance, I purpose to spend some Time in Prayer before I set out, with Reference to it, bespeaking the divine Preservation, Presence, Conduct and Blessing. I purpose with more Care to guard my Thoughts when travelling alone. There is some Truth in that Saying, that *every Man alone is aut Angelus, aut Diabolus, either an Angel, or a Devil*. I don't expect the Entertainment pious Mr. *Flavel* had in his Journey ; but if my Mind be furnish'd for such Work, and bent that way. I may have (as many a one has had) no small Refreshment and real Intercourse with God

on

on these Occasions, reflecting on the Providences of God towards me; his kind and gracious Dispensations. on my own Sins and wants, sending up frequent devout Petitions to Heaven, praising God, resigning myself to him, my Concerns, my Family, any special Affairs in View, and that are depending, &c. Lord, help me thus to employ myself, and improve my Time in journeying, as I have Opportunity. When I come to my Inn, every, Night I would immediately, or soon, retire and acknowledge God in the Safety, Comforts and several Occurrences of the Day. I would endeavour to be chearful and pleasant in Company, tho' with Caution, watching against Lightness, Raillery, bearing hard upon any, and making Sport with their Weaknesses, against Vanity, Romancing, Lying, still setting the Lord before me, and carrying my Religion along with me, in my Diversions as well as Business. When I return home, I would always review my Journey, not only my Expences and my Accouhts, but my Sins and my Mercies; bring these into my Oratory, and give them a proper Place in my Devotion. O! for deeper Impressions from above. Lord, renew a right Spirit within me.

*On the Death of several intimate Friends.*

SEveral of my particular Acquaintance, and some of my very intimate Friends, have lately been removed into the other World; and more than one or two of them by a very short Sicknefs. It wou'd argue strange Stupidity in me, to let all this pass without any serious Thoughts, tho', alas! they have been too few, and too cold. Among other

Things I can't but reflect on the distinguishing Providence of God in sparing me. 'Tis no doubt a Mercy and demands my Acknowledgment, tho' methinks there is something humbling in it: They are safe landed, got home, advanc'd to the higher Services and Enjoyments of the Church above, and I am left behind in a World of Sin and Sorrow, Temptations and Snares. Had I been as well prepar'd as they, surely my Preferment had not been delay'd. I know we are apt to speak, even of such Persons as I have my Eye upon. with a sort of Lamentation, as if the World was their only Happiness, and death their Undoing. He's dead, POOR MAN; a Language and Stile, I confess, I don't understand in the Mouth of a Christian. How odd wou'd it look to say in Earnest and with an Air of Seriousness and Concern, of the Mariner that has been long toss'd at Sea, and but narrowly escap'd being shipwrack'd *poor Man*, he is got into his Harbour? Religion teaches us otherwise, *Blessed are the Dead that dye in the Lord*: And thus I ought to think of my Friends; I cannot question it concerning some of them. They are enter'd into Rest, *have fought the good Fight, finish'd their Course*, and are now triumphing with their Lord, whilst I am yet in the Field of Battle, sowing in Tears. However there is this Mercy in it, and I would chiefly on this account esteem the Continuance of Life a Mercy; *that I have a longer Seed-time*, and more Opportunity to prepare for Eternity. Help me, Lord, to apply myself with Diligence to my proper Work, and I desire patiently to wait thy Time for my Dimission.

Some

Some Circumstances in the Death of my Friends, whom I have followed to the Grave within a few Months past, particularly the Suddenness of it, brought to my Mind a Question I have heard debated in Conversation, and found debated in Books, viz. *Whether sudden Death* (in the proper Sense of the Word, as it notes a Death without much Warning) *be an Evil*, and whether 'tis fit to pray against it? As to which my Thoughts are. that 'tis either desirable, or otherwise, according as the State of Things are with us. To such as are in a good Measure prepar'd for Death, it can never be unseasonable; and often the Suddenness of it may be reckon'd a Felicity to them, especially if the Shots of Death have been the constant Matter of their Exercise, as is the Case of some very serious Persons, and was of one of my lately deceased Friends; the Suddenness of whose Death I could not but look upon as a signal Favour: They had scarce Time to view an Enemy, the Prospect of which at a Distance fill'd them with Terror. They went through the Valley of Death, scarce knowing where they were: How often have I seen them in their Bondage, crying out: O! how shall I grapple with Death? I can't bear the Thoughts of it; whereas Death stealing upon them in this manner, they fell by it, without seeing its Dart, which they us'd to foresee with so much Dread. *Get thee up, said God to Moses, to Mount Nebo, and die there. And there he died according to the* Deut. 32.  
*Word of the Lord.* The Rabbins say, his Soul 49. 50.  
 departed with a Kiss, or that God took it — 34. 5.  
 out of the Body with a Kiss. He seems to have had an *Euthanasie*, a calm easy Death, free from the Violence of Distempers, and the Reluctancy of his own Mind. A sudden Death has



this Advantage in it often; it prevents the many tedious Conflicts good Men so much fear'd: They get away without passing through the more solemn Forms of dying, and without suffering the fruitless, but troublesome Care and Endeavours of Physicians and Friends, to detain them: Nor do they only escape the Dread, but in a great Measure the Pains of dying; I mean those Sickneses, Faintings, Decays and manifold Sorrows; the wearisom Nights and Days that attend a long Illness, gradually introduce Death, and are frequently more grievous than Death it self: Certainly 'tis not desirable to languish on a Sick-bed Years or Months. Who would not chuse, if it so please God, to pass more immediately from Action and Service to Honour, rather than wear out the poor Remainder of a useless Life in Sighs and Groans?

On the other Hand, it must be granted that a little Warning may be a Favour to good Men, in some Circumstances; as it gives them an Opportunity for such Services as may yet remain to be done, or want to be revized, and better done: The setting their House in order, taking a more solemn Leave of Friends and Relations, exercising Repentance and other Graces, trimming their Lamps for the Bridegroom's coming, &c. But after all I desire to be intirely resign'd in this Matter, leaving myself nothing to chuse, but refer all to the great Lord and Sovereign of Life. The only Thing I would be concern'd about, is that I may not be surpriz'd, but be in a constant Readiness, have all things set in order; my House, my Heart in order, that no Work necessary for a safe and comfortable Death may be left undone, that whenever Death comes, I may be able to bid it welcome.

And

And O! that God would help me to make some right Improvement of these Providences: I think myself many ways a Loser by the Death of my dear Friends; I may also gain by it. if it be not my own Fault. In order to which I would endeavour to follow them in my Thoughts into the other World: Sometimes I find myself dispos'd to do so, and ready to wish, O! that I was with them. I have had some Hours of comfortable Converse with them; but how much better Company would they be now, were I fit to be join'd to their Assembly, and have a Place among them. Lord, when shall it be! I would endeavour to copy after them, and learn their Excellencies. How charitable and compassionate was good ----- How serious in Worship? I remember an Hymn she sometimes used when joining in Prayer: I have thought of it some scores of times since her Death. I could not but look upon it somewhat like the Stamp of the Foot in Musick, for keeping the Time. How mortify'd to the World and spiritually minded was the pious ----- He seem'd to have no Care but about his Soul and Eternity: He was so much above the World, that he was almost out of it before he died, and indeed could scarce think or speak of any thing else with Pleasure, but Heaven, and what concern'd the Way to it. How useful a Man was the judicious Mr. ----- useful in the Neighbourhood, and eminently so in the Church to which he belong'd: He was none of those that minded his own things, with a Neglect of the Things of Christ: He was a Lover of Hospitality and of good Men; charitable to his Enemies, and always faithful and affectionate to his Friend. How meek, lowly, broken and contrite was dear -----; almost always condemning herself, and lying in Sack-cloth: Every Body could

see eminent Graces in her, but herself. I reckon indeed she suffer'd some Disadvantage from her bodily Constitution, which made her State and Walk less comfortable; however it was safe, and I observ'd her latter End was Peace; eminently so. Lord, pity a poor Creature, vile, worthless, and almost lost to every good Work: thus left behind by my Friends, every Way behind: Behind in a dark sinful World, and behind in Attainments, Temper and Frame. How unlike am I to thyself? how unlike to some of thy Servants? But thou hast the Residue of the Spirit: Make me more like thine, and it will be a good Evidence I am thine, and shall at last be with them. Help me to keep in Mind, and imitate their Graces, and to be a Follower of them, who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promises.\*

---

*On the several Ages of Life.*

*Specimen  
Eighteen.*

**I** Was in Company the other Night, when it was discours'd, what Age of Life is most desirable? With most indeed such a Question is easily

---

\* Whatever Disputes there are about *commemorative* Days. Days kept in memory of Saints departed, whether lawful and convenient, I think it past Dispute that we ought one way or other to remember them; and the Design of this Specimen is to invite and divert the Reader to one way that here is unexceptionable. We should often think of our serious departed Friends, set their Example before us, get into their Company in the other World; many Advantages may accrue to us from thence, and I reckon it especially seasonable when they have newly left us,

resolv'd,

resolv'd, who can think of ~~no~~ Age but the *Vigour of Youth*, with any Satisfaction. One Person was mention'd, who has scarce reach'd forty, and yet has been heard several times to express his Concern that he was so far advanc'd, and like so soon to leave this *dear World*, or at least suffer an Abatement of its Pleasure: Nor is this so different from the common Sentiments of Mankind, as to be thought very peculiar. Alas! *I am on the wrong Side* 50, is a Saying, which tho' sometimes deliver'd with an Air of jesting, has a great deal of the inward Sense of the Speaker, in it: Nothing more terrible to many, to the most, than Age, the *Devil of old Age*; they dread it as Misery and Undoing. And indeed, was the Happiness of the Body, or that the Body is the Instrument and Channel of the proper Happiness of a reasonable Creature, there would be some Sense in their Resentment, because as the Body grows old, and decays, the Pleasures and Happiness of it must in course decay also; on which account there can't be a more deplorable Case than that of the poor Sensualist, who knows no Life but that of the Animal, and consequently whose Happiness must be continued within the narrow Bounds of 40 or 50 Years at the most.

The Conversation led me a little to reflect upon this Matter, and particularly to consider with myself, what Age of Life ought to be esteem'd by a wise and good Man, as most significant and valuable. Life is divided into different Periods: We don't come into the World in our full Stature and Capacity, and die in the same State, but pass through different Stages, as Infancy, Childhood, Youth, Manhood, and old Age. Custom and common Estimation has taught us thus to distinguish Life, and the Scripture seems to countenance such a Distinction.

How



How to fix the precise Limits of these several Periods, may not be very easy, nor is it of much Consequence. *Infancy* is the first and shortest Stage of Life: I don't mean in the Law-sense of the Word, according to which all are Infants under the Age of 21, but in vulgar Acceptation; and we may allow to it four or five Years. *Childhood* may be extended to about 12 Years, at which time, according to the Jewish Doctors, Persons begin to be *sui juris*, capable of making Vows and the like. *Youth* reaches to about 20, and Manhood to the Time when the Strength and Vigour of Nature begins to be impair'd, and from thence *old Age* creeps on us. Which of these ought to have the Preference, is the Question; and to be sure *Infancy* has no Claim to it; the Man can scarce be said then to live, tho' the Animal doth. In the next Stage Reason begins to blossom, and the Mind to open, and in the following (Youth) the Faculties thereof gradually exert themselves: But how low our Reason? How weak our Judgment? *When I was a Child, I spake as a Child, I understood as a Child, I thought as a Child.* And with how much Infirmary, that is, they that have pass'd thro' that State, and have put away childish Things, know. *Youth* seems to have a little more of the Rational in it, but almost infinite are the Dangers and Follies that attend it: So few get through this State without Falls, Ruin, or at least Hurt, that no wise Man, when he comes to look back upon it, would desire to return into it again. The Paths of Youth are slippery Paths. Whatever young Persons think of themselves, of their Conduct and Measures of acting, their thoughtful solicitous Friends can't but observe them with Pity and Fear: They are generall exceeding wise, though without all Experience,

1 Cor. 13.  
11.

perience, rash in their Judgments, peremptory in their Resolutions, impetuous in their Desires, and eager in their Pursuits; so that they do little that will bear the Examination of a more mature calm Age; much that requires Repentance; little that will afford Comfort in the Review. And often we see such Steps then taken as lay the Foundation of many Sorrows, through the whole After-life. In short, every one that considers the Circumstances of this Age, must give into Solomon's Censure, *Childhood and Youth are Vanity.*

The next Period, that of *Manhood*, reckoning from a little above 20 to 50, may be thought the best of our Time, and 'tis granted it has many Advantages, but not without many Allays. A good part of it is ordinarily spent before we get quit of that foolish Dream of an earthly Happiness, with which we are so apt to entertain our selves in our first setting out in the World. We are busie a great while in trying and proving the fine Scenes we had painted on our Imaginations; and indeed not so much lay aside our former Vanity as turn it towards other Objects, for what Difference is there between him that notes upon a Bag of Money, and him that plays with an Hobby-horse, save that the grown Child is a more Child? So that upon the whole (a religious Bias and Temper of Mind being suppos'd, which it must be allow'd the former Years most fitly serve to introduce) I can't but reckon the latter Stage of Manhood, *between 50 and 60*, preferable to any other; the most important Opportunity of Life, Youthful Heat and Fervour begin now to abate: The Judgment is ordinarily come to a full Maturity: The World has shewn itself an Impostor in all its Forms. By this Time sure, if ever, we shall be convinc'd, how little

little it can contribute to our true Happiness: Some more eminent Degree of Mortification, and manifold Experience in the several Branches of Religion may now be expected; so that in this Stage the Christian sets out with a greater Stock, and richer Furniture of Knowledge. And on these accounts, as well as many others, I apprehend the common Saying exceeding heterodox, that a Person is on the wrong Side of 50, when he is turned of it. I should rather call it the *right Side*, not only as he is nearer Heaven, but as he is in his most improveable Age, in the *very prime of Life*. And as by the Providence of God I am now brought to this Period, I would endeavour to take the Advantage of it, consider and improve it as my best Opportunity for Religion and another World. Lord, direct and assist me by thy Grace.

In order to it I purpose and would endeavour, (1) suitably to review the former Stages of Life, to consider my Dangers, Mercies, Deliverances and Sins. I thank God that I have not Religion now to begin; that I have been preserv'd and kept hitherto. I have taken many false and foolish Steps, and have Reason to weep over every Age. Oh! how many my Miscarriages! but blessed be God I have not made Shipwreck of Faith and a good Conscience. Much have been amiss, and might, I see, have been mended: I desire to be thankful in the mean time Things are no worse. 'Tis a Pleasure to me to think I am got so far thro' Life, with some comfortable Hope of Heaven (ador'd be divine Grace.) I should be loth to go back again, as meanly as I have acted, unless I was sure to escape the Follies I have run into; much less would I desire it for the sake of youthful Pleasures and Enjoyments: I know by woful Experience how  
vain,

vain, deceitful and treacherous these are, and am thankful I am got so far through them, and deliver'd from them. I hope I do not look back with Regret that they are over, crying out with the poor Sensualist, *O that I was young!* I have an higher Game, a more noble Prize; may I constantly press forward towards it. (2) I would endeavour to disengage myself from the World, withdraw my Affections from it, be getting it out of my Hands as much as my Circumstances will allow; however out of my Heart: I leave others to pursue Projects for this World, it becomes me to be taking leave of it, and turning my Shots another way. (3) I purpose to correct, as far as I can, former Mistakes; to mark and avoid the Rocks I have split upon, or been in Danger of. If I am to learn Wisdom and Caution by the Experience of others (*felix quem faciunt, &c.*) much more by my own. (4) To look upon this part of Life as more especially due to Religion. Let my Children and Juniors mind the World, my Care shou'd lie very much another way: Life is short and uncertain; this is the most profitable Time of Life, *my harvest*. I wou'd be up, and doing, and now at last remember *one thing is needful*. (5) I wou'd take care not to lose my Time, either by Idleness or Impertinency, doing nothing, or nothing to the purpose, but desire to be employ'd in such Things as most directly concern my *high Calling*, and will turn to best account at last, not pursuing Riches, Fame, &c. but attending the proper Duties of my Station, and the Work of Religion, that is in the nearest Connexion with Heaven. Lord help me to do this; lead me in thy Truth, and teach me: Direct me to my Duty, assist and succeed me in it; and if I shall live through this Period,



Period, to old Age, may it be a good old Age full of the Fruits of Righteousness. Save me from the common Infirmary and Disgrace of old Age; *Covetousness*. Why shou'd I grasp a Shadow that is flying from me? Pursue and hug the World so inordinately, when I am just ready to leave it? Nothing more incongruous than this. O! my God take me under thy Conduct, be with me in the remaining Part of my Journey and Warfare; and in this Stage particularly: Keep me from the Evil of the World, from all Apostacy and Declining: May my Paths be as the shining Light that shines more and more unto the perfect Day: May my future Time and Life be sacred to Religion, and wholly set apart for God, that I may review it with Pleasure, and have the Comfort of it in old Age, on a Death-bed, and to Eternity. Amen, Amen.

---

*On human Friendship.*

*Nineteenth  
Specimen.*

I Have lately had Occasion to reflect upon the Nature, Principles, and Instability of human Friendship. Several Incidents have led me to this; and when I consider the Matter a little, the Grounds upon which the Generality proceed in it, the Motives to it and Measures of it, I cease to wonder that 'tis so corrupt, so precarious, and so uncomfortable: Not only Humour, Whim and Fancy; but often downright Iniquity is the Foundation on which it stands. Persons recommend themselves to others by their Vices, as is every day evident in numerous Examples: The Pimp establishes a Friendship with the Adulterer, the Drunkard with his  
Com

Companion, who loves the Sot for no other reason but because he is like himself; and I have often seen the Detracter and Tale-bearer get into the very Souls of some Persons that relish that vicious Conversation, and secure an Interest with them, which no real Goodness cou'd hope to do: And how great a Stroke have Sycophants, the Obsequious and Fawners, with Mankind? They are aware of the blind side of their Neighbours, and by soothing their natural-Passions, Pride, Self-love and Vanity, make them their property, and carry all before them. In the mean time, how rare is virtuous Friendship, founded upon real Merit and Goodness cultivated and improv'd according to the Rules of Religion, and for the Purposes of it? that it is conducted according to the Laws, and in Subserviency to the Ends of true Friendship? Or if there seem to be something of this in the Beginning of the Friendship, how nice and fickle is it? Sometimes our Friends will desert us upon a very slight Occasion, and which was really none, had it been rightly understood; sometimes out of meer Humour, we can never learn why; sometimes even when we are contriving the best Offices of Kindness towards them we are capable of; sometimes when we are pursuing our Duty and acting in that Pursuit, to the Conviction of their Conscience, as well as with the Testimony of our own; yet if the Thing be not popular, if it fall under the Censure of others, if it interfere with any little Interest or Passion of theirs, or the Methods of acting be not agreeable to their Gust, you are given up, there is an end of the Friendship, and it may be not only Coolness, but Enmity succeeds.

O my Soul! learn Wisdom; endeavour for some Instructions by such Instances as these, so frequently display'd, and even just now, before thy Eyes.  
Lord,

Lord, be my Teacher. I would endeavour among other Things, as the Improvement of such Providences, (1) To lessen, and in a great Measure withdraw my Dependence on Men: May I cease from Man! *all Men are Liars*, (i. e.) defectible, changeable, and may deceive. (2) To be steddy and faithful in my Friendship; this I should learn from the Resentment I feel in myself of the Treachery and Unsteadiness I have experienced. (3) To bear, with as much Calmness as I can, Disappointments of this Kind. Such is the Frailty of human Nature, that I must expect them, and therefore should provide for them. (4) To make God my Friend, and he will never deceive nor forsake me. (5) To secure the Testimony, and rejoycing of my own Conscience: And in order to this, (6) To keep on in the Way of Duty, with a generous Neglect of the Opinions, Favour and Frowns of others. *Amicus Plato, &c.* Truth and Duty should be dearer to me than the Applauses of all the World. (7) To wait for the State of perfect Love and Friendship above. Lord, assist me herein. May I expect less from the Creature, more from thyself: I am willing my Encouragements to, and in my Duty, should be all deriv'd from Heaven; thy Acceptance, thy Smiles are enough: If my Friends approve me, and are with me in the Way of my Duty, 'tis well, I desire to be thankful, but if not, I desire to be easy; my Eye is to the Hand of my Master. *There is none on Earth I desire besides thee.* In thy Favour is Life, and thy loving Kindness is better than Life.

*On a special Instance of Diligence in worldly Affairs.*

T'Other Night the Practice of a Gentleman <sup>Specimen</sup>  
(pretty remarkable for raising a large Estate <sup>Twentieth.</sup>  
by his own Industry) was mention'd in Company  
where I was ; and I had heard it mention'd some  
time before, not without such Praises as are generally  
bestow'd on them that do well for themselves.  
He would be up, and in his Counting-house by three  
a-Clock in the Morning, and abroad about his Business  
by six ; and this not accidentally and occasionally,  
but it was his Practice, even on the coldest  
Day in Winter. When I heard this, I must confess,  
it strangely lessen'd the Value of such, Industry  
with me, to consider *that it respected the Things  
of this World only*, Things of so little Importance  
and Duration: Had this Labour not been about the  
*Meat that perisheth*, but that *which endureth to everlasting  
Life*, the Affairs of the Soul and Eternity, it  
had been something ; but as it was, methinks, 'tis  
*magno conatu nihil agere*, to take a great deal of  
Pains about nothing.

But, O my Soul, canst thou not learn something  
from hence? How do such Examples reproach thy  
Coolness, Sloth and Indifferency in the high and  
momentous Concerns of another World? 'Tis  
said of a good Man, that when he observ'd an im-  
modest Woman spend several Hours in decking and  
preparing herself to please a wanton Lover, he wept  
on the Reflection, *that it was more than he had done  
that Day to please God, and adorn his Soul*. Lord,  
quicken me to my Duty. Shall Men of Business  
be thus resolute in Pursuit of this World, deny  
their Ease, and abridge their Rest, to settle their  
Accounts, and manage their Trade ; and shall I



find no Zeal in the Work of Heaven, when I have infinitely greater Things in View, the true Riches, the Gold tried in the Fire? For not only the after Recompence, the eternal Weight of Glory the Prize of the *high Calling*, surpasses all their Gain, but even the present Improvement of one Grace is exceedingly preferable to it: *The Trial of Faith is much more precious than of Gold that perisheth,*  
*1 Pet. 1. 7.* And what shall I say of Communion and Intercourse with God? Is not this a more excellent, delightful and profitable Employment? Shall the Merchant leave his Bed so early, for the low dull Work of Per-centing, &c. and shall I redeem no Minutes from Sleep, Diversions, Company, &c. for converse with Heaven! Think, O my Soul, of the Example before thee; think of the Example of thy Lord and Master, who rose up a great while before Day, and *departed into a secret Place*  
*Mark 1. 35.* and pray'd, At three a-clock in the Morning in the Counting-House! But when in the Oration? Lord, make me as wise for my Soul, as others are for their Bodies, and when the Accounts come to be cast up, I know who will be richest.

---

*On the Failings of good Men, and the Resentment we are apt to have of them.*

*Specimen  
Twenty  
first.*

**A**Mong the many Exercises and Trials that attend us thorough this State of Imperfections, sin, and Vanity, the Failings of those I converse with, are not the least; and methinks I find a greater Sense of these, and myself more aggriev'd by them than formerly, or indeed than ever before

fore \*, whether this be owing to them or myself ; That they are more apt to shew their Faults, or I more apt to espy them, is a Question I shou'd inquire into. It wou'd be Vanity in me to make it an Argument of greater Virtue, as proceeding from more Experience, a better Taste of Things, and a quicker Apprehension of what is good, just and right, and the contrary. Tho' I doubt not this is sometimes the Case, verifying that of Solomon. *In much Wisdom there is much Grief, and he that increaseth Knowledge, increaseth Sorrow.* But what-  
Ecccl. 1.  
18.

ever be the Occasion, the Exercise is real, and the Burden of it sometimes so great, that I think myself oblig'd to consider the Master, and endeavour my own Relief.

And may I not be mistaken, and carry Things too far in my Censure of others ! Probably what I esteem a Fault, is none, or at least they do not apprehend it to be so : If it be a Fault, they may not often be guilty of it : I may take them at a Disadvantage, and see them in one of their worst Moods. That way of acting and speaking, that is so offensive to me, may not be their Manner. I don't know the Resentment they have of it themselves : I see the Folly, but do not see the Censure of it afterwards ; do not see them on their Knees or Faces, bewailing their Infirmary, and condemning themselves with more Severity than I condemn

---

\* I am supposing this to be the present Case of the Christian, whom I personate in the Vindication ; and as I apprehend it would be of singular use for serious Persons to bring their particular Cases, Temptations, Trials, and the more instructive Occurrences in Providence into their Oratories and Devotion, state and argue them with their own Souls and before God, I would accordingly recommend the Practice, and have given some Examples of what I intend.

them. In short, we are very incompetent Judges of all the Failings of others, as not being able to take in all that belongs to the Case; and therefore shou'd not be ready and forward to pass a Judgment, especially an uncharitable one: And besides, if they have their Infirmities, have they not their Excellencies too, their bright as well as dark Side? And why shou'd I not look at the one as well as the other? Have not I Infirmities, as well as others? Am I not conscious of as bad Things in myself, as I complain so much of in others, if not in the same, yet in a different Kind? And why so indulgent of my own Infirmities, and so severe towards those of other People? I expected more Prudence, Wisdom, Gentleness, Meekness, Charity, Usefulness from such and such; more Reverence in Devotion, a greater *Decorum* in their Conduct; but how defective am I in these and many other Things myself? O my Soul! take thyself to task here; *first cast the Beam out of thy own Eye, and then shalt thou see more clearly to cast the Mote out of thy Brother's Eye.*

Nor may I be sufficiently appriz'd of it, how much real Infirmity and Evil there is in this Temper of mine, *resenting so deeply the Infirmities of others.* The Wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be intreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits, *without Partiality* (*ἀδιακρίτως*); the Word may be as well render'd, not censorious, without critical Severity in judging others, as a great Man \* observes, who adds, "They that have most of this Wisdom, are least rigid to those that have less of it: I know no better Evidence of the Strength of Grace, than to bear much with those that are weak in it." To the same Purpose another devout † Person, "It is often our own Imperfection, that makes us reprove  
" the

\* Bp.  
Leighton  
Serm. 1.  
P. 5.

† Life of  
Monk. de-  
Fenelon, p.  
292.

“ the Imperfections of others: 'Tis a sharp-sighted  
“ penetrating Self-love, which never pardons the  
“ Self-love of another. The Passions of other  
“ Men seem infinitely ridiculous, and insupport-  
“ able to him that is given up to his own. Divine  
“ Charity makes great Allowances for the Weak-  
“ nesses of others, bears with them, and treats them  
“ with Gentleness and Condescension. It is ne-  
“ ver over hasty in its Proceedings. The less we  
“ have of Self-love, the more easily we accom-  
“ modate ourselves to the Imperfections of others,  
“ in order to cure them patiently. We never make  
“ an Incision, without putting a great deal of  
“ Balm upon the Wound. ” And elsewhere (in his  
Dialogues of the Dead) “ A Man of imperfect  
“ Virtue sinks under the Weight of others Imper-  
“ fections : Such a one still loves himself too much  
“ to bear with what is contrary to his own Taste,  
“ and to his own Maxims. Self-love will no more  
“ endure to be contradicted by Vice, than by Vir-  
“ tue. Imperfect Virtue is captious censorious,  
“ sour, severe and implacable. Perfect Virtue is  
“ always uniform, meek, affable and compassionate.  
“ It takes every Burden upon itself, and thinks of  
“ nothing but doing good. It is the Principle  
“ of disinterestedness, in regard to ourselves, and  
“ of compassion for others, which is the true  
“ Bond of Society. ” How just are these Senti-  
ments, and how much am I condemned by them ?  
O ! for more divine Love and Charity : The World  
would thereupon soon appear another Thing to me.  
I see the Ground of my Quarrel with others is  
very much in my own Breast : I love myself, and  
not them, and that makes me uneasy. Had I more  
of the Gentleness, Goodness and Kindness of the  
Gospel. I should see less of the Infirmities of other  
Men ; or however behold them with another Eye,



cast a Veil over them, and turn my Resentments chiefly against myself,

Oh! my God, form my Heart to a Correspondence with the State of Things with me. I am compass'd about with Infirmities, my own, and those of others, and must expect the Exercise and Trial of them. The World lieth in Wickedness, and as for the Church, 'tis a sort of an Hospital, where all are Patients, and even the best are but under Cure. May I not cherish my own Infirmities, nor be unduly affected with the Infirmities of my Neighbours, Two or three Things I would propose to myself, and endeavour. I would not pass over the Sins and Follies of others without any Resentment: No Charity obliges, to this; there is neither Duty nor Safety in it. Lot was vex'd with the filthy Conversation of the Wicked: Rivers of Tears ran down the Psalmist's Eyes, because Men kept not God's Law. When the Apostle speaks of some in his Days, who were *Enemies to the Cross of Christ, whose End was Destruction, whose God was their Belly, whose Glory was in their Shame, who minded earthly Things*, he could not mention them without Weeping, I am not to deny or palliate the Sins of bad Men, or the Infirmities of good Men, but maintain a just Sense and just Abhorrence of them. I propose and would endeavour to withstand the Infirmities I observe in others; not to think the better of Sin and Folly, because of the Character of the Person in whom 'tis found; to put as favourable a Construction as I can upon the Actions of others; to bear heir real and certain Infirmities with Patience? to endeavour to help and heal the Infirmities of my Brethren, and to wait for the State above, where there shall be none of these Blemishes and grievances, and where all Imperfection

Phil 3.  
18, 19.

tion shall be done away. Lord, afford me thy Teaching, the Influences of thy Spirit, correcting my Heart and Frame, and fortifying the Mind. May I in Patience possess my Soul, converse with Mankind according to the Laws of Charity, Kindness and Love, and be concern'd rather to act the Part of a *Physician*, than a *Censor* among them.

*Upon the first Audience of the Russian Extraordinary Ambassador. (From Mr. Boyle's occasional Reflections, p. 337.*

“ I See the general Expectation, that there will  
 “ be here this Night, a magnificent Appearance  
 “ has produc'd one: And as it often happens in *Specimen*  
 “ publick Shews, that the chief Part of them is *Twenty*  
 “ made by those that come to see them; so here, *second.*  
 “ besides those whose Duty obliges them to at-  
 “ tend at the Solemnity, there is a greater Con-  
 “ course of fine People, of either Sex, than any  
 “ Thing of this Nature has for many Years occa-  
 “ sion'd; and if the Ambassador be what a Man  
 “ of his Employment should be, and what some  
 “ say he is, a Person acquainted with the Manners  
 “ of Men, he cannot but know, that we, as other  
 “ Nations, value our own Fashions enough, to  
 “ look upon Men disguis'd by the *Russian* Dress  
 “ as little better than Anticks, if not as some new  
 “ Kind of Northern Animals: But for all this  
 “ gazing Throng of gawdy Spectators, that were  
 “ able to put an ordinary Stranger out of Coun-  
 “ tenance, to appear in an Habit differing from  
 “ theirs, the Ambassador, and those that come a-  
 “ long with him, think not fit to decline the *Rus-*  
 “ *sian* Habit and Ceremony for the *English*, but

“ keep to the *Ceremonies* us’d in *Russia*, as strictly  
 “ as if the Monarch of it, that sent them thither,  
 “ saw them here? and whatever those may think  
 “ of the Ambassador, that are wont to estimate  
 “ Men by the Fashionableness of their Cloaths;  
 “ yet the wiser and more intelligent do not blame  
 “ him for refusing to disparage the Fashions of  
 “ his own People, by appearing asham’d of them,  
 “ but do farther think it prudent in him, to pre-  
 “ fer the Pleasing his Master and his own Coun-  
 “ try-men, before the gratifying of Strangers;  
 “ since ’tis not here, but at home, that he expects  
 “ the Recompence of his Behaviour and Embassy.  
 “ Thus when a Christian, who belongs to a ce-  
 “ lestial King, and whose *Citizenship* is *Heaven*,  
 “ being but a Stranger on Earth, converses among  
 “ the Men of the World, tho’ in Matters indif-  
 “ ferent, there is often requir’d by Prudence as  
 “ much of Compliance, as is allow’d by Innocence;  
 “ yet when there happens an Ocasion wherein he  
 “ can’t comply with the depraved Customs of  
 “ those among whom he lives, without disobey-  
 “ ing him for whom he lives, and whose Servant  
 “ he is; or doing something that would derogate  
 “ from the Dignity of a Person related to such a  
 “ Master; he will then less consider what may be  
 “ thought of him by a Multitude, than what Ac-  
 “ count he is to render to him, who has forbid-  
 “ den Men to follow a Multitude to do Evil.  
 “ And as he knows his Reward would be much  
 “ less than he reckons upon, if it were a Thing to  
 “ be received on Earth, not in Heaven; so how  
 “ strange and unfashionable soever his Conformi-  
 “ ty to the Orders of his Sovereign may appear,  
 “ he chuses rather to displease Men than God, and  
 “ acts as both *seeing* and being seen by him that is  
 “ *invisible*.

Upon

*Upon the Sight of the Effects of a Burning-glass.*

(From Mr. Boyle, *ibid.* p. 399.)

“ IT is a Fault incident to many good Men to  
 “ be too much indispos’d to entertain the Pre-<sup>Specimen</sup>  
 “ cepts of Virtue as such excellent Things deserve, <sup>Twenty</sup>  
 “ in case those that teach them do not practise <sup>third.</sup>  
 “ them. There are too many that do not think  
 “ themselves oblig’d to take even the wholesomest  
 “ Advice from those, whom they see more care-  
 “ ful to give it to others, than to follow it them-  
 “ selves; and some of them are so nice, that they  
 “ will scarce read a Book of Devotion, unless it  
 “ come, like that *St. John* eat in the Apocalypse,  
 “ *from the Hand of an Angel*. But for my Part,  
 “ tho’ I hope I both value and desire religious  
 “ Preachers as much as the rest of my Brethren,  
 “ yet I think it would be much to the Injury  
 “ both of Scripture and Reason, if we should suf-  
 “ fer the personal Faults of Men to keep them  
 “ from doing that good their Nature fits them for.  
 “ The Etymology of the Gospel, importing its  
 “ being welcome News, it’s Pity any one that  
 “ teaches it, should not have a Title to the Cha-  
 “ racter *David* gave *Abimaaz*, of whom he said, *he*  
 “ *is a good Man, and brings good Tidings*; but my  
 “ Desire of Piety in a Preacher is more for others  
 “ sake than mine; for I know not why Truth,  
 “ which is an intellectual Thing, should lose its  
 “ Nature by any mortal Viciousness in the Pro-  
 “ poser. I know there is something extraordinary  
 “ in the Case of *Noah*, who awoke from his wine,  
 “ and immediately prophesied; and yet the Event  
 “ verified his Prediction. Our Saviour instruct-  
 “ ing his Disciples about the Scribes and Phari-  
 “ sees



“ sees, who sate in *Moses’s* Chair, at the same time  
 “ commands them to conform to their Doctrine,  
 “ when he forbids them to imitate their Example.  
 “ The wise Men did not the less find Christ at  
 “ *Betlehem*, tho’ the Priests and Pharisees sent them  
 “ without accompanying them thither ; and the  
 “ *Affyrian* General was cur’d of his Leprosy, by  
 “ following the Prophet’s Prescription, convey’d  
 “ him by that *Gebazi*, who by his unworthy Car-  
 “ riage in that Business transplanted (if I may so  
 “ speak) that foul Disease into himself and Poste-  
 “ rity. I will therefore consider Sermons more  
 “ than Preachers : For as in a Burning-glass. tho’  
 “ the Sun-beams do but illustrate, not heat in their  
 “ Passage, they may yet by its Assistance kindle  
 “ Subjects that are more dispos’d to receive their  
 “ Action ; so those very Truths and Notions of  
 “ a learned Preacher, which do but enlighten him,  
 “ may inflame his Hearers, and kindle in their  
 “ Hearts the Love of God : And as if a Perfume  
 “ be set on Fire by the Beams projected through  
 “ a Burning-glass (which they do not so much  
 “ as warm in their Passage) the Scent is no less  
 “ odoriferous and grateful, than if it had been  
 “ produc’d by an actually burning Coal ; so neither  
 “ is that Devotion, which is kindled by the Elo-  
 “ quence of an indevout Preacher, any whit the  
 “ less acceptable to God, for their not being them-  
 “ selves affected with the Zeal they beget in others ;  
 “ And what the Book of Kings relates of *Elisba’s*  
 “ Bones, contains a far greater Miracle in the Hi-  
 “ storical, than in the Allegorical Sense, in which  
 “ ’tis no such Wonder to see a Man rais’d to Life  
 “ by a † dead Prophet.”

Upon

---

† I reckon the Admonition here given of an exceeding Im-  
portance,

*Upon the Shop of a deformed Painter, rarely well stored with beautiful Pictures.*  
(Ibid. p. 405.)

“ **H**ERE is a Shop so well furnish’d, that Beau-<sup>Specimen</sup>  
 “ ty seems to have assumed all the Variety <sup>Twenty</sup>  
 “ of Features and Complexions, she can be dress’d <sup>fourty</sup>  
 “ in ; but tho’ the Limner has drawn some Pieces  
 “ so like, that an actual Confronting the Artist’s  
 “ Work and Nature’s would scarce distinguish  
 “ them (since the former would appear to differ  
 “ from the latter but in that Silence. which the  
 “ latter’s Admiration to see themselves so perfectly  
 “ represented, would impose ; ) yet is the Painter  
 “ himself so deform’d a Creature, that he might  
 “ draw a lovelier Face, even than any here, by  
 “ drawing one perfectly unlike his own. Alas !  
 “ this discloseth the Difference there is betwixt be-  
 “ ing able to write fine Characters of Virtue, and  
 “ the possessing it. How ridiculous should I e-  
 “ steem this Limner, if with all his Ugliness he  
 “ should esteem himself handsome, because his Pencil  
 “ can draw Faces that are so : As absurd were it in  
 “ us to grow proud of our devout Composures,  
 “ and fancy Piety ours, because our Discourses can  
 “ possibly inamour others of it. The Devil doth

---

portance, tho’ such is the Infirmary of Mankind, that few, I am afraid, are able to receive it. The Author must not be understood as if serious and devout Preachers were not most desirable ; and no question such are generally most successful. The most piercing Oratory is that which comes from a warm Heart, under deep impressions of God and the Divine Spirit ; nor can I think the Blessing of Heaven often attends the Administrations of loose vicious carnal Men, who neither believe, feel, nor care what they speak.

“ some-

“ sometimes suffer us unmolestedly to write well,  
 “ if he can but persuade us we need do no more  
 “ and that good Pens may dispence us from good  
 “ Actions. Our Paper-wars against Vices are of-  
 “ tentimes like *Alexander's* against the neighbouring  
 “ Nations, not out of Hatred, but Glory; not to  
 “ extirpate, but to conquer them, and manifest to  
 “ the World the Sufficiency of our Parts by a  
 “ Victory; after which we often treat the van-  
 “ quish'd Enemy with greater Courtesy than those  
 “ whose Quarrel we undertook. Discourses against  
 “ Vice may as well be indited by Vanity as by  
 “ Zeal, and meant to express Wit, not Piety; and  
 “ if (as it chanceth but too frequently) we grow  
 “ proud of them, we do like Witches, turning  
 “ Exorcists, only comply with Satan to cast out  
 “ the Devil. Indeed it often happens to us, as  
 “ it once did to *Gideon*, who of the Spoils of  
 “ God's and *Israel's* conquer'd Enemies made  
 “ an Idol, which prov'd in the End his and  
 “ his House's Snare. It was a most instructive  
 “ Check and divine Admonition that our Saviour  
 “ gave his Apostles, when in the Account they  
 “ brought him of their Embassy, they joyfully  
 “ related their exercised Power of dispossessing  
 “ Devils: Notwithstanding answer'd Christ, *in*  
 “ *this rejoice not, that Spirits are subject to you, but*  
 “ *rather rejoice that your Names are written in Hea-*  
 “ *ven.* In effect, tho' *Judas* was one of the Per-  
 “ sons invested with this miraculous Power of  
 “ casting Devils out of others, yet we read that  
 “ *Satan* enter'd into him, and that it had been good  
 “ for him that he had never been born. And  
 “ tho', as *Solomon* tells us, *he that winneth Souls*  
 “ *is wise*, yet it is he only that shall do, as well  
 “ as teach the Commandments, that shall be  
 “ call'd great in the Kingdom of Heaven. The true  
 “ Chri-

*Jud. 3.*  
*24. &c.*

*Matt. 5.*  
*19.*

“ Christian should be willing to impart any use-  
 “ ful Discoveries that God shall please to vouch-  
 “ safe him; but he will ever consider the most  
 “ taking Notions he can form of Virtue, more as  
 “ Engagements to it, than Arguments of it: And  
 “ since there is not any thing in which Charity  
 “ ought more to begin at home, than in devout  
 “ Instruction, he will endeavour to make himself  
 “ as much Piety’s Votary as Advocate, to imitate  
 “ those truly wise Men, that as they inform’d  
 “ those of *Jerusalem* of the Star they had seen  
 “ in the *East*, did themselves follow it, till it  
 “ brought them to Christ; to entitle himself to  
 “ that of our Saviour. *A good Man out of the Luk. 6.*  
 “ good Treasure of his Heart bringeth forth good 45-  
 “ Things; and (finally) to take his Celebration  
 “ of Virtue from his Experience, not his Fan-  
 “ cy, as Nurses first feed themselves to nourish  
 “ their sucking Infants, to whom they give no  
 “ Meat, which they have not in their own Breasts  
 “ first digested into Milk; lest (like the Carpen-  
 “ ters that toiled to build the Ark to save *Noah*  
 “ from the Deluge, themselves perish’d in) *when*  
 “ *he has preach’d to others, himself should prove a*  
 “ *Castaway.*

I have now finish’d the Examples; several have  
 been offer’d of every Kind, the Reader will think,  
 I am afraid, far more than sufficient: And indeed  
 they are more, not only than I design’d, but than  
 I am pleas’d with, upon the Review. All I have  
 to say as an Apology is, that several of the Sub-  
 jects, and I hope several Thoughts upon them, will  
 be of Use to some, who may read them for their  
 Instruction, if not for their Imitation in the like  
 Exercises: Nor may it be amiss for Persons less ca-  
 pable of thinking and composing for themselves, to  
 turn to such of these Specimens, as they find a-  
 greeable



greeable to their Circumstances, making the Changes and Alterations their Case may require. After all, those that don't need them, or like them, may pass them over, and there's no Hurt done.

I reckon it best ordinarily to recite the Meditations : Not but that Reflections may be made *occasionally*, without the Labour of Writing, or any special Care in ranging and disposing the Thoughts in a proper Method: And 'tis no small Advantage that will attend these more transient Exercises, as they employ and improve the Mind, bring in Instructions from a Variety of Subjects that occur, excite Devotion, help to beget and cherish a spiritual Frame. But the Kind of Meditation I am now recommending, will require a little more Pains; and I think, should for the most Part, at least, be written. What are the *Psalms*, but a Collection of divine Meditations, upon various Occasions answerable to the Circumstances that *David* and others (the Pen-men of them) were in? 'Tis granted they had extraordinary Assistance; but that should be no Objection against other good Men attempting the best they can in the same Way. And as 'tis evident most of the *Psalms* are *occasional* Meditations, in which the Composers had special Reference to their own Case, and took rise from thence; we should, methinks, look upon their Practice as an Example to us, and set it before us for our Encouragement and Imitation.

But though the Meditation may be wrote, and ordinarily should, it need not be long, nor need we be solicitous about Method, Style, and other Regularities; a few, *even extemporary*, Thoughts may sometimes be highly useful----For Instance: This Day I read the Life of young Mr. ----How excellent a Christian was he at 25? How poor and sorry a Creature am I at 50? I can't but remark a  
few

few Things concerning him, well worthy of my constant Imitation; as (1.) His Victory over his Passions; his Meekness, his Charity and forgiving Temper, *Page---* (2.) His Prayerfulness, *Page---* (3.) his Contempt of the World, *Page---* (4.) His careful Improvement of Time, *Page---* (5.) The mighty Reverence he always express'd for divine Things, not only when in Worship, but in common Conversation, *Page---* (6.) His Readiness and Willingness to die, *Page---* Oh! how far am I left behind by many that set out after me in Religion? What have I been doing all this while? like the Door upon the Hinges, running the Round of duties in a dull, formal Manner? Lord, look down upon me in Mercy; pour out of thy Spirit upon me: It becomes me to make some serious Resolutions on this Occasion; particularly I purpose (1) ---- (2.) &c.---

*Jure---* A few Days ago I fell into Company with some Gentlemen, particularly, Sir *Elymas* ----- and ----- *Spermologus*. They presently began to cry out of Priestcraft, and rail at the Clergy, making them all a Pack of Villains, that only pretended Religion to cloak their Pride, domineering Spirit, and worldly Interest. One of them seem'd to make some Exceptions in behalf of a few modest and honest Men, he supposed there might be among them. Another reply'd, after a profane Preface; *never a Barrel the better Herring*. I hate Priests of all Religions. A third, that would take it ill not to be thought the wisest Man in the Company, run out into a Discourse about the intolerable Abuses the common People had suffer'd, and every where still suffer, by Means of these Impostors, who had turn'd Religion into Mystery and Nonsense. Do you ever hear these Fellows prate, saith he? I am forced, I own, to go to hear them sometimes:

sometimes ; but I always relieve myself as soon as I can, by falling asleep. This was follow'd with an high *Encomium* upon natural Religion, not without some bold and bad Reflections on the holy Scriptures. I must confess, I was a little surpriz'd with the Discourse, having never met with such Insolence before, tho' I have often heard of the like from others. I thank God I am not at all stagger'd with such weak and impotent Attacks as these ; which I can't but look upon as the Raving of Men out of their Wits, and the last Efforts of Libertines, to get rid of a Book that, it may be, has a little hamper'd them, and been troublesome to them in the Pursuit of their Lusts. I hope I am too well establish'd in the Belief of the Bible (upon a careful Examination of the strong Evidence, which recommends it to my Faith) to be moved with a few Flirts of Wit: I am satisfied the main Reason why such Sparks as these find Fault with the Bible is, because it finds so much Fault with them: Did they but desire it was true, and would they be pleas'd to have it proved true, the Work was half done with them ; they would soon get above their Prejudices, and see Cause to think it true. Nor can I help suspecting their pretended Zeal for natural Religion to be a Sham. They cry up that, not that they value it, or live up to its Rules ; for then they could not despise the Bible, where it appears in its greatest Lustre and Glory ; but because they can shape and bend it (having got quit of the Bible) according to their own Minds, *i. e.* their Passions and Inclinations. Natural Religion with them, is just what suits their Natures ; and 'tis an admirable Scheme they form of it : They soon come to think God is altogether such a one as themselves (*Psal.* 1. 21.) that every Thing is lawful they desire should be so ; that sure God will not damn a Man for taking a  
little

*little Pleasure out of the Way*; that he has not given Men such strong Inclinations to torment them, as would be the Consequence, if they might not gratify them. Here the Bible stands before them with a drawn Sword, and rises up against them with full Light, and the highest Authority: And hence their Quarrel with it, and in a great Measure with the Preachers of it. O my Soul! bless God that has deliver'd thee from the Delusions of these unhappy Men, that has kept thee out of the Chair of the Scorners. Thou needest no more to convince thee of the Excellency of the Bible, than a serious View of the State of those that want it. Pity these poor Creatures; their Case is deplorable: And indeed their Sin seems to come nearest to that against the Holy Ghost of any we are now capable of committing. But I leave them in the Hands of God, and recommend them to his Mercy ----

*June* ---- I lately heard of the Death of pious Mr. ---- He was a Person of many and great Excellencies. I desire to be sensible of the Loss I, and indeed the Church of God has sustained by his Removal. Among many other Things in him, exceeding worthy of Imitation, I would never forget these two. I observ'd that in publick Prayer he generally kept his Handkerchief close upon his Face all the time; which serv'd both to cover it, and dry up his Tears, which I have Reason to think were not uncommon in his Devotion. And how serious and solemn an Air appear'd in his Countenance afterwards? He did not sleep away the Prayer, nor suffer his Eyes to wander about thro' the Congregation. An useful Admonition this, which it concerns me to attend to. Another Thing in my Friend well worthy of my Remembrance, was his Practice of keeping a secret monthly Fast,

O o

in



in which he was constant and serious, and which I have Reason to suppose was intended by him, not so much to keep under the Body, and subdue exorbitant Desires, Lusts and Passions, (on which Account, it may be, he had less Occasion than many others for such a Discipline) as to improve his Devotion, and wind up his Heart and Affections as near Heaven as he could. A Fast-Day, with him, was a Day of Eminent Communion with God; not merely, or chiefly a Day of Humiliation and Tears, but, as I apprehend his Case to have been, at least sometimes, a Day of Spiritual Joy and Triumph. Happy Souls, who are often thus employ'd; *in whose Heart are the Ways of God!* May I not only admire, but imitate such Excellencies; and by such vigorous Efforts and Effays in the divine Life, get more above the World, the Body, and Animal Life, and foretaste the Life to come.

I lately light upon the Life of *Monf. de Fenelon*, Archbishop of *Cambray*: Several Things I find in it which, methinks, shew a Christian Grandeur and Elevation of Mind above what is common. I was surpriz'd, I confess, to find such a Man so wofully enslaved to Church Power and Authority, as to sacrifice his Reason and Understanding to the Dictates of the Pope. But how hard is it to throw off inveterate Prejudices, and the Principles of Education? In the mean time there seems an ingenuity and Honesty even in this Part of his Conduct, that gives an honourable Idea of the Person, Allowance being made for his Prepossession, and the Notions he was bred up in. As they believe the Infallibility of the Church and Pope, they must, in Consequence, believe the Decisions that come from thence are sacred and divine; accordingly, a full Submission is due. This Sense he himself had  
of

of the Matter. “ My Submission, saith he, was P. 124.  
 “ not a Stroke of Policy, nor a silence in respect  
 “ to Men, but an inferior act of Obedience paid  
 “ to God alone. According to catholick Princi-  
 “ ples, I look’d upon the Judgment of my Su-  
 “ periors as an Echo of the supreme Will. I did  
 “ not stop to consider the Prejudices and the Dis-  
 “ putes which preceeded my Condemnation. I  
 “ heard God speaking as to *Job*, out of the midst  
 “ of the Whirlwind, and say to me, *Who is this*  
 “ *that darknetb Counsel by Words without Knowledge?*  
 “ and I answer’d him from the Bottom of my  
 “ Heart; *since I have spoken unadvisedly, what can*  
 “ *I answer? I will lay my Hand upon my Mouth.*”  
 And again, “ + I would rather die, than directly P. 158.  
 “ or indirectly defend a Book which I have con-  
 “ demned without Restriction, in the Sincerity of  
 “ my Heart, from a Principle of Docility and  
 “ Submission to the Holy See.” and may not  
 this Instance of Absolute Resignation to the *pretend-*  
*ed* Head of the Church, admonish me concerning  
 my Duty to the *True Head*? There was no Preju-  
 dice or Passion in his Decisions; his Doctrines,  
 Rules, Laws, Censures, are all pure, divine, with-  
 out Mixture of Error and Infirmary: I know God  
 has spoke by the Lord Jesus, as for this Man (the  
 Pope) I know not whence he is. Oh! for a true  
 Docility to my great Lord and Master! May I  
 bow my Understanding to his Authority. I may,  
 and should use it to find out the Meaning of his  
 Doctrines and Laws, but must not set it up in Op-  
 position thereto. If my great Master has said it,  
 has taught it, or commanded it, ’tis enough; I  
 would lay aside all Cavils, resign, submit, obey  
 entirely and without Reserve.

How many fine Strokes of Piety and Devotion  
 do I here meet with, among some that I can’t so  
 O o 2      well

well understand nor digest? I would particularly remark what occurs † 293, 294. I am sensible I may borrow Hints from thence very much to my Advantage; and I would be the more concern'd to do so, in regard they are so suitable to my Case, and proper to afford me Relief under my present Infirmary. Oh! may I be always open to Conviction, and to Reproof; be ready to receive the Precepts of Wisdom and Virtue wherever I meet with them. Lord, be my Instructor; and may the Inspiration of the Almighty give me Understanding.

Thus may the Christian employ himself in a Sort of *Extempore Meditation*, upon any Subject he pleaseth, and that Providence lays before him. The Advantages of such a Method of Devotion are not few, nor small. But I had rather the Reader would try the Course prescribed, and prove by his own Experience what they are, than receive the Account from any Representation I can make of them. And indeed I have spent so much Time upon this Head already, that I must not farther enlarge.

---

† I have inserted the Passages in these Pages before, and mention them here as proper to be brought into this Kind of *Extempore Meditation*. Any thing we meet with in Books, in Sermons, in Conversation, that is instructive, may afford a fit Subject for a Meditation; And I reckon it would be well worth while for such Persons, as are intent upon Improvement in Religion, to converse with the Lives of eminent Men, and to collect out of them their several Excellencies, and all such Instances of more sublime Virtue, Piety and Devotion, as occur there. These they would do well to take down in Writing, often consult, and make use of in Meditation; to incite to which was one Reason of my mentioning the Lives in the Examples above.

SECT.

## SECT. XI.

*Of Self-Examination; which is consider'd more at large, and as Part of the daily Exercise of a Christian, in his Oratory or Closet, with Motives and Directions.*

3dly, **A** Nother Part of our Work and Employment in the Oratory is *Self-Examination*; which I am now to give an Account of. I have drawn out the Discourse on the two former Heads, especially on Meditation, to so great a Length, that I must be forced to contract what remains, and reduce it within as narrow Limits as I can, so as to avoid Obscurity. Some readers will more readily excuse me, when they consider that the Subject now before me, and that of Prayer, which is to follow, not only find a Place in almost every Book of Devotion, but almost fill it; whilst the other Particulars, especially Meditation, are but rarely touch'd, and I think not at all, in the Method I have pursued; so that I am ready to hope this will be some Apology, both for my Prolixity in the one, and Brevity in the other. And if any shall complain of a Defect in this Part of the Discourse, (on the Head of Examination) perhaps I may afterwards supply it, if I shall have an Opportunity of performing what was proposed, but must at present be omitted, viz. an Account of the extraordinary Duties of the Closet; as on Days of Fasting and Thanksgiving. When I shall endeavour



some Help to the serious Christian, how to form and keep his Dairy, and how to make Use of it in his daily Course; and especially on the Occasions mention'd, *Days of solemn Thanksgiving and Fasting*. On these Occasions a more close Examination of ourselves is necessary; and therefore hither I refer the fuller Discussion of the Point. And that the Christian may proceed with more Clearness and Ease in his Work (examining Heart and Life) I propose, if God please to favour the Design, a Scheme of Christian Virtues, Graces and Duties, as laid down in the Bible; collecting such Texts as concern the Government and due Ordering of our Thoughts, Desires, Affections, Passions and Actions, with the Sins and Vices contrary thereto.

*2 Tim. 3. 26.* The Scripture is profitable for Correction, 'Tis a compleat Rule of holy Living; it gives Laws to the whole Man, and points out all our moral Errors and Mistakes. We cleanse our Way by

*Psal. 119. 9.* taking Heed thereto according to the Word, And I reckon it would be of eminent Service towards our Correction and Reforming, and contribute not a little to render Examination more successful, to have the Particulars of the divine Rule brought under proper Heads, and set before us in an ordinary *Paradigm*, or Scheme. Here we may behold our selves as in a Glass, soon discover our Deviations, Blemishes and Defects, and know what Manner of Persons we are: But this, and the Examination it subserves, must remain to some farther Opportunity. In the mean time, as Examination must be esteem'd Part of the *stated and ordinary* Duties of the Oratory, I shall not quite pass it over, though I dispatch it in short, and more superficially.

And that I may proceed as distinctly as I can, I shall reduce what I have to say to the following Particulars

Particulars. (1st.) Examination supposes a Rule according to which we are to try our selves, our State, Life and Actions. To examine is *ad examen revocare*, to bring to the Standard or Rule: This is the Import of the *English* Word; and much the same Sense as the *Greek* Word, which we translate *examine* in the New Testament, *δοκιμαζεν*. It notes such a Trial of a Thing as Goldsmiths make of Metals by the Touchstone: That which can bear the Touch is upright, pure, good and approved, *δοκιμος*; which cannot, as being adulterated, or counterfeit, is reprobate and disapproved, *αδοκιμος*. The Examination of our selves supposes an authentick Standard to which we are to apply, and by which we are to judge of our selves: *And this is the Holy Scripture*; which, as 'tis given by Inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, teaching us what to believe; for Reproof, pointing out Errors, and setting a Mark on dangerous Principles; for Correction of Manners, of Heart, Frame and Life; and for Instruction in Righteousness, directing us in all our Duties towards God and Man: So 'tis able to make the Man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good Work, 'Tis a compleat Rule, without any Defect, every Way sufficient for all the Purposes it's designed to serve. <sup>2 Tim 3. 16, 17</sup> It describes the Christian, lays down the essential distinguishing Marks, by which he may be known; directs him in all his Duties, conducts him in his whole Course and Walk; is a Lamp unto his Feet, and a Light unto his Path, <sup>Psal 119. 105.</sup> This is the Rule by which we are to judge of ourselves; he's a Christian that has the Heart, Temper, Frame, and Walk here requir'd; he that wants these is *αδοκιμος*, reprobate and disapproved; not that an absolute Confirmity is expected: The best have something lacking in their Faith, that needs to

be perfected, 1 *Thess.* iii. 10. Something lacking in their Hope, Love, and every Grace, many and great Defects in their Obedience: And our Comfort is, that the Gospel has its Grains of Allowance, doth not weigh us rigorously, but accepts of Sincerity. True, tho' imperfect Grace; upright, tho' defective Obedience, will pass in the Chancery of the Gospel, as I may call it: So that tho' the Law of God is our Rule, our only Rule, to which we must have Recourse in our Examination, yet we are to consider it in the Gospel Form, with such Abatements and Mitigations as are suitable to our State. *If thou, Lord, should'st mark Iniquity, who could stand? But there is Forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared* Neither our Habits nor Acts of Grace and Obedience come up to the full Demands of the Rule; but if we have them in Truth and Reality, we may stand the Test, notwithstanding our Defects, and shall be *accepted in the Beloved.*

2dly, There is an Examination that refers to our State in general; the great Designs of which is the Discovery of our spiritual Condition, whether we be true and sincere Christians or not. Concerning which let me observe, *that we may know our State. Examine yourselves, saith the Apostle, whether you be in the Faith; prove your own selves; know ye not your own selves, how that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobate?* Every Christian ought to try himself, and may know himself if he be faithful in examining. The frequent Exhortations of Scripture hereunto imply both these, viz. That the Knowledge of our selves is attainable, and that we should endeavour after it. Why should the *Apostle* put them upon examining and proving themselves, unless it was possible to know themselves upon such Trying and Proving? So, 2 *Pet.* i. 10. *Give all Diligence to make your*

*your Calling and Election sure.* He can't refer to an external Calling, or outward Profession of the Gospel, that they were sure of already, but must, I presume, refer to an internal Call; as if he had said, *Endeavour for a satisfactory Evidence of it, that you are Christians, chosen and approved of God.* This they were to make sure, *sure to themselves*; consequently 'tis what they might do. They might be sure of their Calling, and of their good State, or such Exhortations as these, how solemn and serious soever they seem, must be vain, and to no Purpose. I add, several have actually attain'd the Knowledge of themselves, and a Certainty of their Calling. *We know, saith the Apostle, that we have passed from Death to Life.* And with how much Confidence doth St. Paul speak of his own future Happiness. *I have fought a good Fight* --- And more directly, *Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness.* And again,

Nor do I apprehend the Knowledge of our State, (call it Assurance if you please) so uncommon and extraordinary a Thing as some are apt to imagine; understand, by Assurance, a satisfactory Evidence of the Thing, such as excludes all reasonable Doubts, and disquieting Fears of the contrary, tho', it may be, not all transient Suspicions and Jealousies. And such an Assurance and Certainty Multitudes have attain'd, and enjoy the Comfort of: And indeed 'tis of so high Importance, that 'tis a Wonder any thoughtful Christian, that believes an Eternity, can be easy one Week or Day without it. And therefore, though this be not the Examination I am more immediately concern'd within this Discourse, I can't but earnestly recommend it to the Care of the Reader. We should examine and try ourselves; do it over and over again;



gain ; repeat and pursue the Enquiry, and not cease 'till we come to some Clearness with Reference to our everlasting State ; and are able to say upon good Grounds, *we know that we are passed from Death to Life*. If any should ask how may this be known, I must refer them, for Satisfaction, to such as treat professedly of the Subject, it being besides my Purpose at present ; only let me hint two Things, *that we are to take the Evidence from the Scripture and our own Hearts compared together*. The one describes the Christian, the other reports him in this or that particular Instance : The former saith what he must be, and is, with respect to his Principles, Frame and Conduct ; the other makes particular Application, resumes, and saith, *I am such a one* ; or I have Reason to hope I am such a one. This may be exemplified by going over any of the great Characters of Christians, as given in Scripture. *He that believes shall be saved*, saith the Scripture ; I believe, saith the Christian. *He that loveth God, the same is known, or approved of him*, saith the Scripture ; I love God, saith the Christian. *If through the Spirit you mortify the Deeds of the Body, you shall live*, saith the Scripture : *They that are Christ's have crucified the Flesh, &c.* *To them that by patient Continuance in well-doing, seek for Glory, Honour and Immortality, he'll render eternal Life* ; this I do, saith the Christian ; and according to the Grounds he has for his Assertion, and the Evidence of this or that Grace and Qualification, so is his Certainty and Assurance. *That he who repenteth shall be pardon'd ; that the pure in Heart shall see God ; that he that cometh to Christ he will in no wise cast out* ; with the other Particulars cited, and many more that might be added, are the exprefs Declarations of Scripture ; that I am such a one as these Texts import and require I should

should be, is the Thing I am concern'd to enquire into: If I have Reason to think I am, and am not mistaken, the Conclusion concerning my present good State and future Happiness is undeniable, and is a natural Consequence from the Premisses. *He that believes, repents, loves God above the World, that is a new Creature, and lives a Life of Holiness and Obedience, shall be saved*; but this do I, therefore I shall be saved. I can't be mistaken as to the first Proposition, it depending on the Authority of God's Word; and if I have Clearness in the second Proposition; if upon comparing myself with the Rule, I find an Agreement, the Conclusion is undeniable: And the Evidence of this Matter, the knowing ourselves, and discerning our Conformity to our Rule, is the great Business and End of our Examination.

Another Thing I would hint is, *that the Knowledge of our State, such solid satisfactory Evidence, as the Christian may rest in, is the Fruit, ordinarily, at least, of much Experience*; 'tis not to be attain'd soon, upon a single Enquiry, but is the Result of many Enquiries: We are to view ourselves *often* in the Glass of the World; compare ourselves with it at different Times, and in all the Varieties of our Postures and Frames. One while, it may be, we look pretty much like Christians; as when Grace is in more lively Exercise, Corruptions are still, and appear mortified: At another time Things look more discouraging, and with a worse Face; so that former Hopes are dash'd, and we begin to call all in Question again. Sometimes the grand Criterion and Mark of a Christian, *the Preference of the other World, and the Concernments of it, to all the Enjoyments of this*, is scarce discernible. At another and better Season we are ready to say, with a Sort of Triumph, *Whom have I in Heaven*  
but

*but thee?* None of these Things move me, neither count I my Life dear, so I may finish my Course with Joy. The Things of this World appear so minute, contemptible, and nothing, *mere Dross and Dung*, compar'd with the high and important Affairs of Eternity, that we esteem them scarce worthy of a serious, solicitous Thought; and when this becomes our habitual Temper, the Evidence of our Sincerity will be more clear and strong. In short, the Christian will not ordinarily know himself, till he has been a considerable while exercised in his Warfare, and has view'd himself from several Distances, as I may express it: He must compare himself with his Rule, not only once or twice, but often, in all the various Shapes in which he appears; and from his Proficiency and Progress in Religion, and growing Conformity to his Rule, at last form the Judgment.

What Hand the Spirit of God has in this Work, assisting us in the Knowledge of ourselves, and in order to an Assurance concerning our good State, I am not now to enquire. 'Tis certain, he indited and formed the Rule by which we must examine: He's the Author of those gracious Habits and Acts, in which our Conformity to the Rule consists; He helps us in the Exercise of Grace: He sometimes, no doubt, shines in upon the Mind, enlightens, and, as it were, comments upon his own Work, makes it discern'd and understood: He may sometimes assist in making the Conclusion; embolden the Christian to determine in Favour of himself, which his great Modesty, Humility, and Timorousness made him shy of doing. Nor will I deny but he may sometimes, *in an immediate authoritative Manner*, interpose and decide the Question, that has long been depending in the Mind, in Favour of the Believer. I assert nothing here, neither

neither will I deny this is ever the Case. His more ordinary Method is to *witness with our Spirit, that we are the Children of God,* Rom. viii. 16. But he may possibly, on *special Occasions*, that require it, witness to them, without much of their Concurrence in the Work: As when the more melancholy Christian, that dare scarce entertain a good Thought of himself, or any Thing he doth, has been long poring upon himself, and is still bewilderd, involved in Darkness and Fears, the divine Spirit may, at such a time, through a special Dispensation of Grace and Favour, come into his Assistance; speak Peace, pronounce and make a Decision in his Favour. But this we are not to promise ourselves nor expect; but wait for Evidence in the ordinary Way. And I persuade myself, all sensible Christians will take this for a Matter of too much Moment, not to deserve their serious Attention; and tho' it is not the particular Examination I am now chiefly to recommend 'tis however supposed to it, and ought to have a Place among the Duties of the *Oratory*. We should take proper Times to settle this great Point, and not rest satisfied till it be settled: We should often ask our selves upon what Foundation we stand in Religion, and for another World; whether we don't delude ourselves with presumptuous Hopes, carry a Lye in our right Hand; whether we don't build our *House upon the Sand*, which will fall at last, and great, and dreadful in its Consequences, will be *the fall thereof*, Oh! let us be in good Earnest in this Matter; search and try our selves, and beg that God would search us, and help us in searching; *and if there be any wicked Way in us, lead us in the Way everlasting*, That we may not think ourselves *to be something when we are nothing*, deceiving our selves, To prevent which,

Matt. 7.  
26, 27.

Psal. 139.  
23, 24.

Gal. 6. 3.

let



let every Man, as it follows in the next Verse, prove his own Work, and then shall he have Rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. One Caution it may be proper to subjoin, because a Mistake here often proves an Occasion of Discouragement to some, *viz.* That we should not look too high, and because we can't find ourselves among the best and greatest Christians, therefore conclude we are not Christians. The Thing to be enquir'd into, and that we have to prove, is the Truth of Grace, and not the Degrees of it. The great Question, in the Examination I am here speaking of, is not whether we have an Alloy, a Mixture of Imperfection, for what we have and shall have whilst in this World, but whether we be Standard; whether we be reprobate Silver, as is said of them, *Jer. vi. 30.* false counterfeit Metal, or whether when tried we come forth as Gold, *Job xxiii. 10.* If we be upright before God, have Truth in the inward Parts, God will accept us notwithstanding Infirmities, and therefore we should not reject nor condemn ourselves.

(3.) The Christian having examin'd and prov'd himself, so far as to come to some Clearness concerning his own good State, 'tis not necessary (it would indeed be impertinent) to be daily repeating the Examination; what need a Man enquire after what he knows, or search what he has already found? One can't imagine that the Apostle *Paul* who had been in the third Heaven, and knew there was laid up for him a Crown of Life, that so earnestly desir'd *to depart and be with Christ*, had any occasion to examine whether he was a Christian or not. And tho' it may be allow'd he far exceeded common Christians, both for the Eminency and Evidence of his Grace, yet 'tis certain his Privilege was not singular. Others may know themselves

selves, many do know themselves, as has been hinted; and when this is the Case of any, it can't be their Duty to be every now and then calling their State in question. Indeed upon any Relapse and Declining, upon Loss of former Strength, Light and Comfort, it may be proper to revise the Account, call Things over again; not only do the first Works, repent and reform, but also re-examine the State; take occasion to inquire, whether there be no Mistake, renew the Watch and Resolution, beg a fresh Uction from Heaven, endeavouring to get all suspicions removed, and the Soul establish'd in the Way of Truth and Peace: Nor will it be improper sometimes to examine, after we have attain'd a comfortable Evidence of our Sincerity, in order to confirm the Evidence, and improve it into a fuller Assurance: The Judgment we make of ourselves is not authoritative, much less final; *he that judges us is the Lord*, and we must not think 'tis so sufficient, that it may not be reversed, much less that it need not be review'd: In short, some, I hope many, Christians have solid Peace upon solid Grounds, and clear Evidence, and these need not examining like those that are utterly in the dark, tho' they may have occasion to look back and revise their Work.

(4.) Besides the Examination that respects our general State, there is a Review of ourselves, and Actions, which is our daily constant Duty; and this is the *Examination* the present Discourse is chiefly concern'd with, which ought to be made Part of the stated Work of the Closet or *Oratory*. It may be call'd Examination, as 'tis a Comparing ourselves with our Rule, bringing the Actions (at Night we will suppose, a proper Time for this Service) of the Day to the Test, the Rule of God's Word, enquiring how far they agree hitherto. We  
are

are to *commune with our own Hearts upon our Bed* (or in our Chamber, as the Word may signify) *Sal. iv. 4.* We are to converse with ourselves, speak to our Hearts in our Chamber, Oratory, or Place of Retirement, and among other Things we should commune with our Hearts about; one is, *what has passed in the Day*, what has been our Conduct and Behaviour in it and thorough it, looking over the Occurrences and Transactions thereof. A Practice that has been recommended by some of the heathen Moralists of the greatest Name, as *Plutarch, Epictetus, Marcus Antonius*, and others; particularly by *Pythagoras*, in the Verses that go under his Name, and are called his Golden Verses. He advises his Scholars every Night to recollect the Passages of the Day, and ask themselves these Questions, *πῶς παρέλκν, &c. Wherein have I transgressed? What have I done? What Duty have I omitted?* Upon which *Hierocles* thus comments: This Course, if duly observ'd, prefers the divine Image in them that use it, leading them to Virtue, and all attainable Excellency, and it seems some of them practised according to these Rules, as *Seneca* tells us. Having suggested that the way to govern the Senses and Passions, is to call the Mind daily to account, he adds, "*Paciebat hoc Sextius, &c. Sextius* did this  
 " at the Close of the Day, addressing himself to  
 " his own Conscience in the following Manner:  
 " What Evil of thine hast thou heal'd to Day?  
 " What Vice hast thou withstood? In what re-  
 " spect art thou better? Anger will cease and be-  
 " come more mild, when it expects daily to be  
 " brought before the Judge. Nothing more ad-  
 " vantageous than this constant Custom of search-  
 " ing through the Day. How composedly and  
 " freely shall we sleep after such a Trial (Peace  
 " being made with God and Conscience might  
 " have

*Seneca de  
 ira, lib. 3.  
 cap. 36.*

“ have been added) when the Soul is either admonish’d or commended, and the secret Censor has taken Cognisance of our Manners. He goes on, “ I daily take this Course myself, plead my Cause, and sit in Judgment with myself; and at night when the Light is taken away, and all is hush and still, I make a Scrutiny into the Day, look over my Words and Actions, and hide nothing from myself: In such a Controversy and Debate thou wast over keen; such a one thou admonishedst over freely (*vide ne amplius istud facias*): Be upon thy Guard for the future——” How noble an Example this? How inexcusable shall we Christians be, if we be found less circumspect, critical and exact in our Conduct than these Pagans, considering how much stronger Motives to Religion, and how many greater Helps in it we have?

The Advantages of such a Course are not a few; particularly, hereby we may attain to, and preserve a distinct clear Knowledge of ourselves, of our present State and Circumstances; what we are, what we want, what our Deserts and Infirmities, what the Spots of our Garments, and Blemishes of our Minds. He that is daily beholding his Face in the Glass of God’s Word, will not easily mistake himself, nor forget what manner of Man he is.

Hereby we shall be directed to the proper Work and special Duty that lies before us; when we know our Case, we shall better know what we have to do, and be upon such Endeavours as are most pertinent, and *therefore* most useful. Examination is in order to Correction and Amendment: We abuse it and ourselves, if we rest in the Duty, without looking farther: We are to review our daily Walk; that we may reform it, and consequently a daily Review will point out to us the



Subject and Matter of our future daily Care. This Day, saith the Christian (upon his Review of Things at night) I lost so much Time, particularly at — I took too great a Liberty, particularly in — I omitted such an Opportunity that might have been improv'd to better Purpose. I mismanaged such a Duty — I find such a Corruption often working; my old Infirmary — still cleaves to me; how easily doth this Sin beset me. Oh! may I be more attentive for time to come; more watchful over my Heart, take more heed to my Ways: May I do so the next Day! The Knowledge of a Distemper is a good Step to a Cure, at least it directs to proper Methods and Applications in order to it: Self-acquaintance leads to Self-reformation: He that at the close of each Day calls over what has pass'd, inspects himself, his Behaviour and Manners, will not fall into that Security, and those uncensur'd Follies that are so common and so dangerous. This frequent View of himself, unless Conscience be stupid and seared (in which Case nothing of this nature can be expected), will point out his Duty as a Penitent and Physician, and excite to it.

And then 'tis evident such a Course will enliven, conduct and many ways assist present Devotion; will furnish for it and help in the Performance, suggest Matter for Confession, Petition, or Thanksgiving, as there is occasion; will make those Services more pertinent, and in consequence thereof more beneficial. Hereby we shall better understand what especially to insist upon in our Addresses to God; what to pray, wait and endeavour, for.

It will be an excellent Remedy and Preservative against Sin, and contribute not a little to promote the Circumspection and Accuracy of Life and Conversation we should constantly aim at.

What

What a good Man saith of Prayer, *that praying will make one give over sinning, or sinning make one give over praying*, may be applied here. 'Tis scarce possible to pursue the Method I am recommending, and at the same time live loosely and without Caution. How shall I answer to myself at night? Such a Question will be a Check to many Follies and Indelicencies in the Day. Conscience will be more tender and watchful, when it knows it must pass through a speedy Examination, and be afraid of any Liberties, for which it expects immediate Censure and Reproach. Learn, Christian, this way of communing with thy own Heart, of carrying on a judicial Process there; set up daily a Tribunal in thy Heart, and it will have an happy Influence upon thy Life.

I might enlarge on many more Particulars, but shall only add one farther, as a special Advantage of such a Course, that as it tends to make Life more innocent and fruitful, so to make Death more safe and comfortable. Did we accustom ourselves to revise Matters, and settle Accounts every Day, we should have less to do at the last: We should have the Account, as it were, summ'd up and stated at the Bottom of every Page, and consequently shall be less involv'd and perplex'd, than if we had the whole Volume of Life then to look over; which indeed would be a vain Attempt, unless this frequent posting and adjusting of Accounts prepare the Matter for a more easy Dispatch. But when the Christian has kept his Books, the Records of Conscience, with competent Exactness and Care; has had frequent Reckonings, not only yearly and monthly, but, in some measure, *daily*; his Business at last will be reduced to a narrow Compass, and he will have little to do, but to make a general Review, with such Recollections

and Devotions as become a dying Saint, compounded of penitential Abasements, and rejoicing Hopes, dropping his Tears over the Infirmities he is conscious of, and triumphing in the Prospect of his Crown, being ready in the mean time to cast it down before the Throne, saying, *Lord, thou art worthy.* Blessed State! which the Course I am advising to, will probably terminate in. Indeed Comfort in a dying Hour, will I presume, very much depend upon the sensible Presence of God then vouchsafed; and who so like to obtain the Favour and Privilege, as Persons engaged in the Work I am speaking of? However, if they have less Comfort, they will have Safety; their latter End shall be Peace.

Reader, if yet thou knowest nothing of this Practice of the Method propos'd, neglect it no longer; daily call thyself to the Bar of thy own Conscience. Object not Difficulties, nothing excellent can be attain'd without some Difficulty: A little Use will make it familiar and easy, and the Pleasure and Profit of it will abundantly compensate for all the Pains. This is to live for thy Soul and Eternity; and is no Care, Diligence and Self-denial due in a Matter of such Moment? A Book of Accounts for an ordinary Trade, can't be kept without some Attention and Application, more than might suffice in the present Case; and shall we so readily submit to take pains even to Drudgery, for the Advantage and Accommodation of the Body, and reject all suitable Endeavours, Care and Thought for securing our highest and everlasting Interest, that of the immortal Soul? Oh how shall we upbraid ourselves in Hell, I might say be ashamed of ourselves even in Heaven, when we reflect upon our Negligence and Remissness, by which we suffer so great a Diminution of our  
Hap-

Happiness. It will, no Question, accent and inflame the Torments of the Damned, to think a Part, a small Part of the Labour and Time thrown away in pursuit of the Pleasures and Profits of the World, might, with the Blessing of God, have secur'd their Salvation; and though there will be no room for such Reflections in Heaven, as would disturb their Happiness; yet a Reflection on their eager Pursuits of Vanity and Impertinence, and their Coolness and Indifferency in the most momentous Affairs, and what they knew to be such and own'd to be such, may be abasing and humbling; hereby their Heaven is lessen'd, and consequently their Joy. *Their Works follow* Rev. xiv. 13. *the Blessed that die in the Lord*; but where there are no such Works, 'tis certain they cannot follow them. Oh! let us be as wise for our Souls, as others are for their Bodies; be as diligent for another World and for Eternity, as others are for this World, and we shan't neglect a Course so well calculated to promote our best Interest and Happiness.

Some Directions I shall subjoin for the Use of those that are dispos'd to the Duty prescrib'd, this Method of daily Examination. (1) Acquaint yourselves well with your Rule, by which you are to examine; and the more distinct and exact your Knowledge is in this Matter, the better you are prepar'd for the Duty before us. I need not repeat, that the Word of God is our Rule, with this we should endeavour to acquaint ourselves. But as it can't be expected every Christian should have all the Particulars of it, that refer to this Matter, in his Mind and in Readiness, as often as he has occasion to compare himself therewith, it would be well to be supply'd with an Abstract, a Scheme of sacred Rules relating to every Part of



our Duty. The Jews reduc'd their Law to 613 Precepts; I don't doubt but there is a Spice of their usual Superstition in this Division: 'Tis however unquestionable, that the entire Bible will afford us less Help in our Examination, than when 'tis divided in the manner propos'd; we need not be solicitous about the Number of it's Precepts, but should be careful to bring them under proper Heads: These should be treasur'd up in the Mind (it may not be amiss to write them down in order thereto) and well digested, as so many Principles by which we are to govern and examine ourselves. They make what is call'd the *Synterisis*, the Rule of Conscience, by which it directs our Actions, and judges thereof.

(2) Be as particular and full in the Examination as you can; try yourselves on every Head of Religion, and Rule of sacred Practice. The Method of doing this may be according to your Scheme or Draught, if you have one; or according to the Order of Time in the Process of the Day; as thus, What was my Care in the Morning? Did I observe Rule then, endeavouring when I awaked to be still with GOD? Did I consecrate my first Thoughts to him? How was the Rest of the Day employ'd? I would look over the several Hours of it. — Or you may proceed according to the Business of the Day, religious Business; as thus, Did I not neglect the Duties of the Closet? How have I perform'd them? Where you will find room for several Enquiries, How did I discharge the Duties of Family-religion? And so with Reference to common Business. The Management of your particular Callings, your Converse, Diversions, &c. The Affairs and Occurrences of the Day may be brought under these Heads, and an Examination pertinent-

ly carried on upon them: Or we may examine by our several Faculties and Powers; as our Thoughts, Desires, Affections, Passions, Tongue, Appetite and Senses, asking ourselves how all these have been employ'd and govern'd; what have been the Sins of them. Or lastly, the same Design will be answer'd if we proceed in the Examination upon the three great Branches of our Duty towards God, our Neighbour, and ourselves. 'Tis good to observe some Method, both to prevent Rambling and Impertinence, and that nothing material may be overlook'd, though not one particular Method is necessary. Let every one take his Choice here, only see that the Work be thoroughly done, and the Enquiry extended through all our Duties and Obligations.

(3) Don't neglect a *transient Review* when you can do no more; even what I intend by the former, may be dispatch'd in a little time, in half a quarter of an Hour, and sometimes less (tho' often we may allow more to it); and when the Christian is straiten'd with respect to Time, or any way render'd less capable of such Work, a *transient Review* of the Day may be all he can pretend to, and it may be sufficient.

(4) Don't examine merely to censure, but to approve as there is occasion. Take notice of what is good as well as what is amiss, that you may praise tho' not so much yourselves, as the Grace of God *that is with you*. We should not place Religion in complaining, nor delight too much in that Strain: We ought to be thankful for the good we do, or get any Day: No question we may take the Comfort of our own good Designs, Endeavours, Works, Success, &c. and should do so when there is Reason for it, provided we acknowledge with suitable Gratitude the Hand that has supply'd and assisted

us. 'Tis not any part of Humility to overlook the Grace of God, or reject the Comfort that belongs to us. We should examine not only to discover what is wrong, but what is right, that we may bewail the one, and rejoice in the other.

(5) It may be sometimes proper to take down in writing, any of the more remarkable Occurrences of the Day: If you have received any special Mercy; had special Help in any Duty and Work you are concerned in, or been guilty of any great Omission, Failing, &c. Note it down in your Paper, as thus: This Morning when I awoke, instead of fixing my Thoughts on God and divine Subjects, I suffer'd them to ramble, and to wander from one Impertinence to another, by which means I became wofully indispos'd for the Duties before me, for my usual Devotion. Indeed I pray'd, but it was in a poor broken heartless manner.— This Morning when I arose, instead of applying myself to God in Prayer, which I generally find best to do immediately (after a few serious Reflections) I gave way to idle Musing, to the great Disorder of my Heart and Frame. How often have I suffer'd for want of more Watchfulness on this Occasion? When shall I be wise!— I have this Day shamefully trifled, almost thro' the whole of it: Was in my Bed when I should have been on my Knees; pray'd but coolly in the Morning; was strangely off my Guard in the Business and Conversation I was concern'd with in the Day, particularly at — I indulged to very foolish, sinful, vile Thoughts, &c. I fell in with a Strain of Conversation too common among all Sorts, *speaking evil of others*; taking up a Reproach against my Neighbour. I have often resolv'd against this Sin, and yet run into it again. How treacherous this wicked Heart of mine! I have  
lost

lost several Hours this Day in mere sauntering and Idleness—— This Day I had an Instance of my own Infirmary, that I was a little surpris'd at, and I am sure I ought to be humbled for. The Behaviour of —— from whom I can expect nothing but Humour, Indiscretion and Folly, strangely ruffled me, and that after I have had Warning over and over again. What a poor impotent and contemptible Creature am I! This Day I have been kept, in a great Measure, from my too frequent Failings—— I had this Day very comfortable Assistance from God, upon an Occasion not a little trying—— What shall I render? And in this Manner the Christian may proceed, upon the Review he makes of himself in his Oratory, varying his Censures as Occasion requires, and suiting them to his different Circumstances: And it may be, you will find it worth while to transfer some Minutes or Hints of this Kind into your Diary; I mean when any Thing has offer'd in the Day that calls for more than ordinary Notice.

6<sup>thly</sup>, Besides stated Examination and Reviews of our Case at the Close of each Day, there are Times that call for more special Examination; as *New-Year's Day*; every Lord's Day; a Sacrament Day, and a Fast Day. On these Occasions the Christian is to make a more diligent Search, and take a greater Compass in his Examination; revise former less Accounts, compare his State at different Stages and Periods, that he may the better judge of himself, and apply to such Work as the present Condition of his Affairs require. Such Specimens have been offer'd already under the Head of Examination, as are suitable to most of these Occasions, and the Christian that is disposed to the Work will easily supply the rest; and therefore I shall forbear exemplifying what I have recommended.

7<sup>thly</sup>, En-



1 Sam.  
xxiv. 5.

7<sup>thly</sup>, Endeavour to get and keep Conscience in such a Plight, as that it may not fail nor deceive you in the discharge of this Duty. A faithful, tender Conscience is one of the greatest Blessings in the World; it will make Life more regular, and the Review of it more easy. *David's Heart smote him, when he cut off Saul's Skirt.* He was got upon a Precipice; approach'd too near a forbidden Life, and was running into Temptation; and for this his Heart smote him; it would not suffer him to proceed farther, nor doth it pass what was done without a Rebuke. And this is the Property and great Happiness of a faithful Conscience; 'tis a Bosom Preacher, stands Centinel in the Soul, gives Warning of approaching Danger, checks us when we come near it, admonishes upon the Commission of Sin, and is at once the Guard and Censor of Life. Study and pray for an upright, faithful Conscience, and labour to preserve it in a due State, that it may be fit for it's Office; to which Purpose 'tis not only necessary that it be awaken'd, sanctify'd, furnish'd with Light from above; a competent Knowledge of Duty in all the Particulars thereof; but it must be kept awake and attentive. And when this is the Case, Conscience will be ready upon Call, ready to produce it's Records, and to confirm with it's Suffrage and Voice every just Censure we pass in the Examination of ourselves. Whereas if Conscience be neglected, corrupted in it's Principles, or lulled asleep, we shall make nothing of such Work, shall neither have Inclination to it, nor Success in it.

8<sup>thly</sup>, Endeavour so to manage this Work, the daily Review of yourselves, your Life and Actions, that you may be encouraged to it, and to persist in it by the Advantage and Comfort of it: A loose, unguarded Life is but seldom review'd; and if up-

on

on the Review of it we don't correct it, we shall soon grow weary of reviewing. In short, we should live so that we may review our Course with Pleasure; and so improve the daily Censure we have Occasion to pass, that we may still find more and more Pleasure in it. This will make Self-Examination delightful, and consequently invite to it, will gradually refine the Heart and Frame, and carry us on towards Perfection.

9<sup>thly</sup>, Apply yourselves to God suitably to the State of Things with you. Our first and immediate Work after Examination is with God, confessing what has been amiss, acknowledging his Grace and Help in what has been well; begging Forgiveness, farther Conduct, Assistance, and the like. Nor is it the least of the Advantages that will attend the conscientious Discharge of this Duty; that it will indite our Prayers, and influence our Devotion. When we have search'd ourselves we should apply to Heaven in a Manner becoming our Case.

10<sup>thly</sup>, Upon every Review and Censure of yourselves, look up to the great Peace-maker the Lord Jesus; *remember if any Man sin we have an Advocate with the Father.* Plead the Blood of Atonement, and lay your Hand upon the Head of this great Victim: The Grace, Favour, and Help you have receiv'd must be placed to his Account; and 'tis through him only that your Humiliation and Repentance can be accepted. Whatever therefore you do, and that you find seasonable and necessary to do, upon your Examination, *do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving Thanks (and confessing) unto God, and the Father by him.*

John ii.

1.

Col. iii.

17.

And having mention'd these few Particulars by Way of Direction, which might have been much more

more enlarged upon, I leave them with the Reader. As for such as may object against this Method, as favouring of Legalism, and being more ado than needs, pretending we are to believe, and not work, in order to Salvation, I have nothing to say to them in this Discourse, which is calculated for Persons of another Stamp. The more common Objections, I reckon, will be taken from the Difficulty of the Work, and are the Language of Sloth and carnal Security; but I have not Room to plead with such at present, from the Importance and Necessity of the Thing; the Pains they chearfully submit to in Affairs of infinitely less Consequence, &c. I would only desire them to ask themselves, whether their own Reason and Conscience do not approve the Method prescrib'd, as just, good, and profitable; whether they don't spend more Time to less Purpose every Day, than might be sufficient for this Exercise; whether this course of Religion (conversing with God and themselves in the Way recommended) would not yield more Comfort in a dying Hour, than the Method of Life they are in, employing their Time in excessive, unnecessary Care and Labour about the World, or passing their Evenings in Clubs, at Taverns or Ale-houses, in Company, Diversions, &c. Reader, lay these Questions before thy own Conscience, and all I request is, that thou wilt answer them in the Fear of God, and act according to the Conviction of thy own Mind.

S E C T.

## SECT. XII.

*Of secret Prayer. Some Particulars explaining the Duty, and directing as to the Management of it. A Specimen of Prayer, representing the Order and Method of it.*

<sup>4<sup>thly</sup></sup>, **P** RAYER is a Branch of the Duty and Devotion of the Closet, that every one will expect should be consider'd in a Discourse of Closet Religion, and some may think should have been more consider'd than here they will find it. Indeed all serious Persons make a great Account of Prayer; they are so far from leaving it out of the Closet, that they are apt to run into the other Extream, and make it the only Devotion there. Closet Religion, with them, signifieth nothing but Closet Prayer; they extend it no farther, and aim at nothing more. This is the Case of many, I am afraid. How much they are mistaken in their Apprehensions, and how defective in their Practice, the former Discourses will shew. But though it be *only a Part*, it must be granted, 'tis a most necessary and important Part of the Duty of the Oratory, and therefore demands a Place in this Work.

As to the Manner, Properties, and several Qualifications of Prayer, 'tis besides my present Purpose to enlarge upon them: Most Books of Devotion insist on these Things. And I shall rather refer the Reader to them, than undertake to do over again, what has been so often done, and well done



done already; especially as I have left myself little Room for any thing farther. I must not, however, wholly pass over so necessary a Branch of secret Devotion, and leave it untouch'd; though I shall consider it only in a general and superficial Way; offering a few Remarks, which may be of Use for the better understanding the Duty, and assist in the Performance of it.

1<sup>st</sup>, There are certain great and essential Requisites and Qualifications of Prayer which are always the same, and always necessary; necessary to all Persons and in every kind of Prayer, and consequently must be found in that of the Closet, as well as others; particularly it must proceed from an inward divine Principle. 'Tis the Prayer of the Righteous that availeth. *The Sacrifice of the Wicked is an Abomination to the Lord; but the Prayer of the Upright is his Delight.* I don't say 'tis not the Duty of un sanctified and wicked Men to pray. *Simon Magus*, when in the Gall of Bit-terness, &c. was bid to pray. The Prayer of such, when it flows from a Conviction of their Guilt, Danger, Misery, a Sense of their spiritual Wants, and is accompanied with Desires of Grace, may be a Means of obtaining Grace, and indeed is appointed for that Purpose: but where the Heart is destitute of Grace, and of Desires after it, Prayer must be of little Value and Efficacy. Wicked Men are to pray that they may reform, and reform that they may pray with Acceptance. *God heareth not Sinners*; none that regard Iniquity in their Hearts. Indeed the Prayer of such Persons is full of Inconsistency and Lies, and carries in it a direct Contradiction to the inward Sentiments, Heart and Frame: And what Excellency can there be in such Forms of Hypocrisy and Flattery?

Farther,

Jam. v. 16.  
Prov. xv.  
8.

Acts viii.  
21, 22.

John ix.  
31.  
Psalm lxvi.  
18.

Farther, Prayer must be *in Faith*, accompanied with a firm Persuasion of the Being and Perfections of God, of his Providence and Government; of his Power, Wisdom, Goodness, and Truth; with Resignation to him, and Dependence upon him. It must be with Fervour and Importunity. It must be in Charity, and attended with a peaceable, forgiving Temper. It must be in the Name of Christ, and in the Spirit, perform'd by his Assistance, and under his Conduct and Influence. These are essential Qualifications, requisite in every Prayer, which God will accept, and from which we can expect Profit and Comfort: The distinct Explication of each would take up more Room than I can allow. The Reader will answer my Intention in mentioning them, if he be solicitous to find these Qualifications in himself, and discover them in all his Addresses to God.

<sup>2<sup>dly</sup></sup>, Though the essential Properties and Principles of Prayer, as I may call them, are unchangeable, and the same in secret as in any other sort of Prayer, yet the Matter of secret Prayer is various and different. The Scripture we have read, the Meditation we have been engaged in; the Examination and Review of ourselves (all which, according to the Method proposed, may fitly precede) will direct our Petitions, supply our Confessions, Thanksgivings, &c. Often the Occurrences of the Day will furnish Matter for Prayer, and influence our Devotion: As the Mercies, Deliverances, Trials, Temptations, and Miscarriages of it. At Night our Prayer should be very much formed with a Reference to these things, and will most naturally and pertinently proceed upon these Heads: And in the Morning, the View and Prospect

Jam. i. 6,

7.

Matt. vii.

7, 8, &amp;c.

Jam. v. 16.

Matt. vi.

12, 14.

— v.

23, 24.

Col. iii.

17.

1 Tim. ii.

18.

John xvi.

23.

Eph. vi.

18.

Jude 20.

spect of what is before us will conduct us in our Applications to God. We are to consider our stated, known Duties, Dangers, and Difficulties; and if there be any thing extraordinary expected in the Service of the Day, order our Prayers accordingly, have a special Regard to both Cases in our Addresses. In short, the Providence and Events of each Day, the Affairs and Circumstances of the Christian are so variable, that his Prayer can't be always the same without being (to say no worse) less pertinent.

3<sup>dly</sup>, In secret Prayer we should have a special Respect to our *present Case*; not to this *only*, but to this *especially*, so as to insist more particularly and copiously upon it: As the Supply of a present Necessity, pardon of a late Transgression, Direction in an Affair of Importance depending, Deliverance from an imminent Danger, or threatening Temptation, &c. Thus when the *Apostle* had the Thorn in the Flesh, a Messenger of Satan sent to buffet him; he besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from him, (*i. e.*) He continued and repeated his Petitions, insisting with great Earnestness (in his secret Addresses, no doubt) upon that particular Thing. We are encouraged to come boldly to the Throne of Grace that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help *in time of Need*; seasonable, opportune Grace, as the Word signifies; Grace answerable to our present Exigency and Want. We should study ourselves, be fully appriz'd of our Case, live acquainted with our own Hearts, and have as perfect a Comprehension, as we can, of our Circumstances, Weaknesses and Wants; and from thence indite our Prayers. As for Instance, If we find any Corruption more than ordinarily prevalent; any particular Sin easily besetting

2 Cor. xii.  
8.

setting us ; we should in our Supplications more especially, level against, and beg Deliverance from it, and Victory over it. If in the Day we have fallen into this or that Iniquity which we have often confessed, we should, in our Retirement at Night, single that out for special Resentment, bewailing the Folly, begging help, and renewing Resolutions against it. If we have received signal Favours and Mercies in the Day, our Devotion at Night should favour of them, and express the Sense we have of them. If we have any Duty before us in the Day of Importance and Difficulty, in which we have often miscarried, we should not overlook this in our Morning Devotion, but lay the Matter before God, and be importunate for his Presence, Conduct and Blessing. “ Lord, supply and furnish me for  
 “ such a Service and Work, that by thy Provi-  
 “ dence I may be called to ; preserve me from the  
 “ Weakness and Infirmary I so often suffer by ;  
 “ grant me a Composure and Presence of Mind  
 “ suitable to my Occasions ; may I have more  
 “ Firmness of Mind, Meekness, Humility, &c.  
 “ Oh ! may thy Grace be sufficient for me.” There may be many such Strokes and Sallies as these in our secret Devotion, and often should be. In short, our Prayers should be form’d according to our Hearts, as our Hearts are to be form’d according to our Occasions and Circumstances. When ’tis thus they are most pertinent, and are like to be most successful.

4<sup>thly</sup>, ’Tis evident, from what has been said, and may be inferr’d from the Nature of the Duty itself, that a greater Liberty may be taken in Closet Prayer with respect to Matter, Method, Expression, &c. than is allowable in publick. We may insist more copiously on some Particulars, and even on a single Head, than would be proper in pub-



lick; begging a special Mercy, confessing a particular Sin, deprecating an Evil we feel or fear: We may, in private, enlarge upon any of these Things, and confine our Prayer to them, more than would be convenient in publick. The Apostle besought the Lord *thrice* for the same Thing, he often return'd to the Subject, and very pathetically and largely, no doubt, insisted upon it. *Christ* prayed the third time, saying the same Words, *Matt. xxvi. 44.* I don't suppose he said only those Words; but being under a particular Pressure, and his Mind being filled with it, he dwelt upon the Subject; his Devotion run upon it at that Time. A greater Liberty may also be used here (in secret Prayer) as to *Method and Expression.* *Let him kiss me with the Kisses of his Mouth, for thy Love is better than Wine,* saith the Spouse, *draw me, for we will run after thee.* How abrupt the Beginning, and incorrect the Style, would the Critick say? The divine Passion, that sometimes fills the Heart of the Devout, won't be confin'd by the Rules of Grammar and Oratory. Indeed Sighs, Groans, and Tears are the best Oratory in secret Prayer: Nor do the little Pauses, frequent Excursions, and Parentheses, which an holy *Pathos* may occasion, marr the Connection and Oratory, but rather improve it. I might add, a greater Liberty may be allow'd with respect to *Gesture and the Expression of Assertions.* *Christ fell on the Ground and prayed.* And we read, that in the days of his *Flesh* he offered up *Prayers and Supplications with strong Crying and Tears.* Devout Persons know something of this; they are often prostrate before God, pouring out their Tears and their Souls, with an overflowing and Indulgence of Assertions, that in publick would be indecent, but here have an Ornament and

1 Cor. xii.  
8.

Can. i. 1.  
— 3.

Mark xiv.  
35.

Heb. v. 7.

and Excellency in them. On these Accounts, as well as others, I can't but think that,

5<sup>thly</sup>, What is called extemporary Prayer is most agreeable to the Closet; it gives more Scope for Enlargement on occasional Subjects, is more suitable to the Liberty which is not only allowable, but expedient in secret; admits of greater Variety than Forms, and may be better accommodated to every Case the Christian may have before him. Not that I think praying *extempore*, or without a pre-composed set Form of Words, absolutely necessary to the acceptable Performance of secret Prayer. I doubt not but serious Persons, who have long accustomed themselves to Forms, may exercise great Devotion, and find much Comfort in the Use of them. Indeed the Manner of Prayer (with, or without a Form) I reckon to be so far indifferent, that neither the one nor the other is necessary; so necessary, as that the different Mode can't be acceptable. Nor should we allow ourselves the Liberty that is too commonly taken, to censure those that differ from us in this Matter; as if, because they don't pray in our Mode, there could be no Devotion in their Prayer. I don't question but one Reason of these mutual Censures, is want of experiencing the Way this or that Side condemns. Thus some condemn extemporary, or free Prayer, because they have never tried it; and having, thro' Disuse, brought themselves under an Inability for it, they are ready to think the Case is the same with all others, as with them: and for the same reason others are apt to censure the Use of Forms; because they have never been accustomed to them. They can't tell how to pray with any Seriousness by a Form, and so hastily conclude no body else can: Whereas, had the Pious and Good in either Way (supposing the same divine Principles, Gra-

ces and Affections they now have) been accustomed to the contrary Way, they might have found much the same Devotion in it; 'tis like would have shewn the same Zeal for it. The Graces of Prayer, Faith, Love, Humility, Contrition, Resignation and holy Desires, devout Affections, are the Life and Soul of Prayer, and much more to be regarded than this or that Mode of outward Performance. As for the Class of *Ranters*, that open their Mouth wide, and pour out their Reproaches upon *Extempore* Prayer, calling it Cant, Jargon, blasphemous Effusions, and the like, I don't think their Rudeness worth regarding; I pity their Rashness and despise their Insults.

Nor am I only willing to allow the Lawfulness of Forms, but in some Cases to give them the Preference; Bishop *Wilkins* calls them *Crutches*, and no doubt there are lame Christians that can't go without them, (to say nothing of the Inability contracted by Disuse). Some are so mean in these Faculties, have their Minds so little opened, have so small a Stock of Ideas, and these so confused; in short, their Experience and Sense of spiritual Things is so little, and they move in so low a Sphere in Religion, that I don't question but a well compos'd Form may be helpful to them *for a Time*; especially if got off Book, with a Liberty to vary it, and add to it as they can, and find Occasion. Not but even these Persons, many of them at least, if they endeavour'd it, might, I suppose, surmount the Necessity, and outgrow the Usefulness of a Form. Farther Progress in Religion, and Acquaintance with God and their own Hearts, would give them Enlargement; *the Spirit of God, sent forth into their Hearts*, would help their Infirmities, and enable them to cry, Gal. iv. 6. *Abba, Father*. Not that the Spirit will teach them  
Grammar,

Grammar, Rhetorick, Propriety and Elegance of Expression; but these are too mean to have any Stress laid upon them in a Matter of this Nature, even by wise Men, much less by God. *We that are evil* will not reject the just and dutiful Requests of our Children, though they utter them lisping, and in broken Language; much less will our heavenly Father do it. *I is* (ego est) *a poor vile Sinner*, &c. may have more Oratory in it, before the Throne of Grace, when it proceeds from a sensible broken Heart, than the most accurate and smoothest Harangue tainted with Pride and *Pharisaism*. Excuse this Digression. What I am saying is, that Forms may to some Christians be expedient and useful; an Help to their Weakness, furnishing them with Matter and Words, guiding them as to Method and Expression, &c.

Notwithstanding these Concessions, I apprehend *extempore* Prayer best suited to the Closet; and that stated Forms are ordinarily an Hindrance to Devotion, and attended with several Inconveniences. They exclude such particular Cases as Providence lays before us, and invites us to consider, and which should often, at least, be largely insisted upon in secret Prayer. They tend to narrow the Faculties, and clog the Devotion of a well prepared Mind. Let us suppose a Person of good Proficiency in Religion, well acquainted with the Scripture and divine Subjects, and with his own Heart in all the Varieties of the Christian Frame; that has been long exercised in the several Parts of his Warfare; has been frequent and fervent in Prayer, in which he has spent many Hours and Days with much Enlargement and Success. Let us also suppose him employ'd in such Exercises as I have been exhorting to; reading the Scripture, expounding and preaching it to himself; meditating on



some divine Subject, reviewing the Actions of the Day ; and now full of his own particular Case, and of those divine things he has been conversant with ; must such a Person, think we, stand still, and pluck his Book out of his Pocket, before he can open his Mouth to God ? Or would not the Book and Form direct him from the Work he would find lying directly before him, and which his present Circumstances, Heart and Frame led to ? Would he need it ? Could he use it without being fetter'd and incumber'd ? Surely, a Form in this Case would be like leaving the Chariot of *Aminadab* to ride in ——— If it be said I put the Case too strong, and suppose Attainments not common. I answer, the Argument will hold in such Cases at least, and it will hold proportionably in Instances of a lower Nature. If the best Christian suffer by Forms, others do so in the Degree wherein they are above them, and need them not ; nor will they (Practice supposed, and Prejudice laid aside) be useful to any but Christians of the lowest Class.

I may reckon it among the Disadvantages of a Form, and as another Instance thereof, that it inverts the natural Order of Things, and occasions an indecent *ὑπερ πρῶτης* in Devotion : Prayer should take Rise from the Heart ; all divine, acceptable Prayer doth so, receiving its Formation there. 'Tis properly the presenting the Desires to God ; consequently Words are to follow the Affections, not lead them, and be commanded and directed by the Desires, the inward Sentiments and Frame ; whereas in a stated Form, the inward Affections are prescrib'd to, and, as I may say, anticipated : The Heart is rather brought to the Words, than the Words to the Heart ; by which means the proper Source of Prayer is shut up, and another open-  
ed.

ed. I might add to the same Purpose, that Forms often hinder Persons from saying what they should, as well as make them say what they should not. 'Tis impossible that any Form should answer every Emergency and Occasion, and take in all the Variety of the Christian's Case. My Circumstances to Day, may require that my Prayer should be very different from what it was Yesterday, if it be pertinent, and such as my Book will by no Means suit; so that being confined to it, I am carry'd off my Point, and hinder'd from pursuing the present Subject, that by Providence of God, and the State of my Affairs, I am most immediately concern'd with. Were all the Subjects of a Kingdom to address their Sovereign in all their Wants, it would scarce be thought pertinent to provide a *common Form* for them, when their Cases are almost as many, and as various as their Persons. And then as Forms prevent what should be said, so they frequently lead to what should not, and cannot truly be said; putting Words into the Mouth, to which the present State and Frame of the Heart doth not answer. But 'tis not my Business here to manage a Dispute; nor is it my Design in what I have said, to censure the Devotion of those that are otherwise minded. I can't question but many pray to very good Purpose by a Form; but I beg leave to say it appears to me they unnecessarily hamper themselves, and that in most Cases, the other Method of free, or *extempore* Prayer, especially in secret, is very much preferable, and I have given my Reasons why I think it so, and refer them to the Reader's Judgment.

6<sup>thly</sup>, Notwithstanding the greater Liberty allowable in secret Prayer, and the Regard that ought to be had therein to our present Case and Circumstances; and that consequently the Christian should

not confine himself to any one uniform Method: yet I reckon it of some Use to understand the proper Order and Method of Prayer; and to be well acquainted with the several Parts of it. Christians have their *common*, as well as special Cases; have Desires, Graces, Mercies, Enjoyments, Infirmities and Wants in *common*, and which are very much the same; the same in one as in another, and the same with particular Persons at all Times: And no doubt Regard ought to be had to these, in the usual Course of our Devotions. Indeed special Cases ought not to be overlook'd; but should, as I have hinted, often direct and form our Prayers: But still we are to attend to the great and stated Occasions of Devotion, and Business of Prayer; confessing the common Sins of our Nature and Practice; blessing God for the common Mercies of his Providence and Grace; petitioning for such good Things as we, and all stand in need of, and that always. The general and common Concernments of Religion, common I mean to the *Fideles*, all the Faithful, are of greatest Necessity and Importance, and therefore should have proper Room in our stated Devotions. In order to which we should, as I said, endeavour to understand the Method and Matter of Prayer in the whole Compass of it: Hereby we shall be furnish'd for the Duty at all times (yet internal Qualifications supposed;) be kept from rambling, and be the more regular in our Addresses.

That I may more fully explain myself here, I shall, for the Assistance of such as need it, represent what I take to be, if not the best, yet a proper Method of Prayer, comprehending all the Parts of it: A regular Prayer, I reckon, should consist of these Particulars; and being disposed in the Order following, they shew the *Method of Prayer*, *viz.*  
 Invocation,

Invocation, Thanksgiving, Confession, Petition, Intercession, Self-Dedication, and a Conclusion.

1<sup>st</sup>, *Invocation.* This we should begin with, which includes the mention of God's Names, Attributes and Perfections, with an Address to him for Audience and Acceptance. We should first enlarge upon some of the divine Perfections, whereby the Mind may be awed, the Affections raised, and a Foundation laid for the Exercise of such Graces as make up the Devotion of Prayer, as Fear, Reverence, Love, Trust, &c. And then having view'd and contemplated the glorious Object of Prayer, we should bespeak his Presence with us, and Acceptance of us.

2<sup>dly</sup>, We may next proceed to Thanksgiving; in which, ordinarily, we should be not only distinct and particular, but copious; blessing and adoring God as the Creator, Preserver, Governor, and Benefactor of the World; for common Providence; for special Instances of Providence and Grace; all which may be enumerated, and should be enlarged upon. I forbear Instances under this and the other Heads, designing to exemplify the whole in a Specimen of Prayer. Let me only add, that we should dispatch at once what concerns one Part and Branch of Prayer, before we proceed to another. As when we are upon the Head of Thanksgiving, we should go thro' it, before we pass to another Subject: The not attending to this is one main Occasion of the Confusion and Disorder some Persons fall into in their Prayers.

3<sup>dly</sup>, Confession may fitly succeed Thanksgiving; which we may pass to in some such Manner as this. "But, O my God! how have I requited thee Evil for Good? What unsuitable Returns have I made for that Goodness and Mercy of thine that has follow'd me all my  
" Days,



“ Days, &c.” And indeed the Consideration of the many Favours we have been acknowledging will tend to affect the Heart, and bring it into a penitential Frame, and so fit it for the Work ’tis now to engage in. In our Confession we should endeavour to be as particular and full as we can, laying open the Evils of Heart and Life, with all their Aggravations.

4<sup>thly</sup>, Petitions may be next subjoined, or Supplications for the Blessings we want. We may connect it with the former Head thus, “ And as “ my Sins are many, so are my Necessities many “ and great, Lord, I come to thee for a supply ; “ bless me, O my God ! with all spiritual Blessings “ in Christ Jesus.” I mention the Connection because there is really a Beauty and Advantage in fit Transitions, tho’ chiefly in publick Prayer, where more regard is to be had to them.

5<sup>thly</sup>, To Petition may be joined Intercession : The former respects ourselves, this others. And here we are to give our Charity full Scope, and take in all proper Cases ; praying for Mankind in general ; for the Church of Christ ; for the Community to which we belong ; for Magistrates, Ministers ; for our Families and Relations ; for the afflicted, tempted ; for Persecutors and Enemies.

6<sup>thly</sup>, Self-dedication will properly enough follow ; in which we devote ourselves to the Service of God, and commit ourselves to his future Conduct and Protection ; begging he would take a fuller Possession of our Hearts, &c.

7<sup>thly</sup>, All is to be concluded with a sort of a Review of the Work ; begging forgiveness of what has been amiss ; and for that purpose pleading the Name and Intercession of the Lord Jesus, and confirming the whole with an affectionate *Amen*.

These

These are the several Parts of Prayer ; and this I reckon a very proper Method of it. I know this Order is different from what some prescribe ; but as the Thing itself is very much indifferent, 'tis not worth while to contend about it, much less would I insist upon it as necessary. It will, perhaps, be thought Confession should precede Thanksgiving ; that having, by the Exercise of Repentance and Faith, in the Mediation of Christ, made Peace with God, we may with more Assurance and holy Confidence, address ourselves to him in the remaining Service : And I should so far have comply'd with the Objection, as to have given a Specimen or two according to that, and some other Variations (though I prefer the Method I have chose) but that I am obliged to study Brevity.

Let me add, 'tis not necessary to go through all these Heads of Prayer at all Times, no, not in publick Prayer, much less in secret. 'Tis not necessary to tie ourselves up to this Order, especially in our secret Addresses : we may insist sometimes on one, or a few Particulars more largely, but transiently touching the other, and should ever be ready to attend the Call of Providence, and make room for special, occasional Subjects. In short, all I design hereby, is to represent the Order of Prayer, and draw a sort of a Plan of it, for the Assistance of younger Persons chiefly, tho' some others might probably receive Advantage by it. To render my Design more effectual, I shall exemplify the Rules mention'd, in a *Specimen* of Prayer, which I here subjoin.

## A Specimen

A Specimen of Prayer; *exhibiting all the Parts of a compleat Prayer in their proper Order; design'd chiefly for the Assistance of younger Persons, and for their Direction in the Method of Prayer.*

The Invocation; being an Acknowledgment of God's Name, his Attributes and Perfections, and an Address for Audience and Acceptance.

Blessed and Glorious God; thou art the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all Things, the Father of Mercies, and God of all Grace: I believe that thou art, and art a Rewarder of all those that diligently seek thee. Thou, whose Name alone is *Jehovah*, art the most high over all the Earth; thy Greatness is unsearchable, thy Understanding is infinite, thy tender Mercies are over all thy other Works: From everlasting to everlasting thou art God; always the same, *with whom there is no Variableness, neither Shadow of Turning*: Thou fillest, O Lord, Heaven and Earth with thy Presence; thou searchest the Heart, and triest the Reins; thou knowest my down-sitting and up-rising; thou compassest my Path, and art acquainted with all my Ways, yea, all Things are naked and open to the Eyes of that God, with whom I have to do. Lord, help me to consider this, to represent thee to myself, when I approach thee, in all thy Glories and Excellencies: And do thou suitably impress my Mind therewith; fill my Soul with an Awe and Reverence of thy Majesty, with Trust and Confidence in thee, and all devout Affections: Thou art a Spirit; help me at all times to worship thee in Spirit and in Truth.

And as I am now come to seek thy Grace, and beg thy Presence, Acceptance and Blessing; look  
down

down upon me in Mercy ; O let thy Spirit help my Infirmities, and teach me what to pray for, and as I ought : Give ear unto my Voice, consider my Meditation ; hearken unto the Voice of my Cry, my King and my God, for unto thee will I pray : My Voice shalt thou hear in the Morning, in the Morning (and Evening) will I direct my Prayer unto thee and look up : Hast thou not said, Ask, and ye shall receive ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened to you : Make good thy Word unto thy Servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope ; and let the Words of my Mouth, and the Meditation of my Heart, be acceptable in thy Sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer.

I am not worthy, O Lord, of the least of all thy Mercies ; and yet how large a Share have I had of them ? Open thou my Lips, and my Mouth shall shew forth thy Praise. I own and adore thee as the great Creator of all Things ; for by the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the Hosts of them by the Breath of his Mouth ; he spake, and it was done ; he commanded, and it stood fast : I am thy Creature, O Lord, thy Hands have made and fashioned me ; thou art the God of the Spirits of all Flesh ; the Father of my Spirit, and my Body is thy Workmanship : Thine Eye did see my Substance, yet being imperfect ; and in thy Book all my Members were written, which in Continuance were fashion'd, when as yet there was none of them : Thou hast cloathed me with Skin and Flesh, hath fenced me with Bones and Sinews ; thou hast granted me Life and Favour, and thy Visitation preserveth my Spirit : In thee I live and move, and have my Being. Thou hast made me after thy own Image, and thy own Likeliness, but a little lower than the Angels, and hast crown'd  
me



me with Glory and Honour ; hast taught me more than the Beasts of the Earth, and made me wiser than the Fowls of Heaven. Oh ! how much am I indebted to thy Bounty and Goodness herein ? Help me to worship and bow down, to kneel before the Lord my Maker : May those Powers, those Faculties and Capacities, by which thou hast distinguish'd me from the rest of thy Creatures, and advanced me above them, be devoted to thy Service, and employ'd in thy Praise.

x x x I bless thee for thy tender Care of me in my Infancy, in that weak and helpless State : Thou tookest me out of the Womb, and madest me to hope when I hung on the Breast : I was cast upon thee from the Womb ; thou art my God from my Mother's Bowels, it is owing to thy Providence that I died not from the Womb, that I *then* gave not up the Ghost ; that the Knees prevented me, and the Breast that I should suck : This I would acknowledge with a thankful Heart. Accept, O Lord, my Desire to praise thee ! I bless thee for thy constant Attendance of the same Providence ever since ; and for all the Instances of thy Goodness towards me ; that thou hast fed me all my Life, and redeemed me from all evil. I bless thee for Deliverance from Sicknefs and Distempers, and from the many Dangers I have been exposed to : That I was not cut off with pining Sicknefs, or with a sudden Stroke, [particularly by \*, &c.] That I was not deprived of the Residue of my Years, but that thou hast in Love to my Soul, delivered me from the Pit of Corruption. Lord, thou hast delivered my Soul from Death, mine Eyes from Tears, and my Feet

---

\* Here mention such special Deliverances as you have had, a Catalogue of which 'tis good to preserve.

from falling. Oh! may thy Goodness lead to Repentance; may I walk before the Lord, in the Land of the Living.

I bless thee I have been brought forth in a Land enjoying the Gospel, and not in the Region and Shadow of Death; that I was not born among *Pagans*, who have not a Bible to use, or *Papists*, who will not allow the Use of it: Thou hast shewed thy Word unto *Jacob*, thy Statutes and Judgments unto *Israel*; thou hast not dealt so with many other Nations; and as for thy Judgments, they have not known them. O my Soul! praise thou the Lord. I bless thee for thy Gospel; for thy Son, the Redeemer of lost Sinners. May his Name be (to me) as Ointment poured forth. O blessed be God, thou hast so loved the World, as to give thy only begotten Son, *That in the Fulness of Time thou didst send forth thy Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.* I bless thee for his holy Life, meritorious Death, triumphant Resurrection and Ascension; for his sitting at thy right hand, where he ever lives to make Intercession for us. 'Tis a faithful saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners (may I not add, of whom I am chief!) Lord, grant me an Interest in this great Salvation! I bless thee for thy Spirit, whom thou hast sent to abide with the Church for ever; to convince of Sin, sanctify and renew the Heart, and dwell in the Souls of Believers. Oh! may he take up his Abode in my Soul, quickening, guiding, sealing, and comforting me. I bless thee for the Appointment of the Gospel-Ministry; that thou hast given Pastors and Teachers for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying the Body of Christ. I bless thee

thee for all the Ordinances of the Gospel, and for the constant Benefit and Advantage I have enjoy'd of publick Instruction: Oh! may I be *a Doer of the Word, and not a Hearer only, deceiving my own Soul*: Lord, teach me to profit; make thy Word the Savour of Life unto Life to my Soul.

XXX I am thankful, O Lord, I was born of Parents who profess the Gospel, and who have been solicitous, and concern'd to bring me up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord. I bless thee I was born in thy Family, in thy Church, within thy Covenant; that I was in Infancy solemnly devoted to thee, entered among thy Disciples and Servants. I bless thee for the early Care of my Parents towards me, towards my Body, especially for their Care of my immortal Soul; for their repeated Instructions, faithful Admonitions and Reproofs, for their seasonable Corrections, good Example, and affectionate Prayers. Oh! may I never be unthankful to thee the Author, nor to them the Instruments of so much Good. I bless thee for all the Helps I have had for my Improvement in useful Knowledge, especially in the Knowledge of God and Jesus Christ, whom to know is Life eternal, that I can read thy Word; have been instructed in the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, and that I have still Line upon Line, and Precept upon Precept; still enjoy the publick Teaching of thy Ministers. O my God, grant all may not be in vain; how much shall I have to answer for, if after all I be found unholy, un sanctified, unfruitful, a Cumberer of the Ground! Oh! Water all from above; write thy Law in my Heart, help me that I may incline mine Ear unto Wisdom, and apply my Heart to Understanding. I bless thee for the Restraints of thy Grace and Providence, that I am not as vile and profane as many others

others of my Acquaintance. I bless thee that thou hast, as I would humbly hope, made some good Impressions on my Soul, hast \* begun a good Work there ; hast called me by thy Grace, and revealed thy Son in me. Lord, strengthen what thou hast wrought, and grant me more Evidence of that great and good Work ! perform it to the Day of Jesus Christ. I bless thee for the Supplies of thy Providence, for Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on ; for continued Life and Health ; for the Direction and Conduct of thy Grace and Spirit, in many Particulars ; for the Affection and Kindness of my Parents and Relations, and Countenance of other Friends ; for the Safety of every Night, and Comfort of every Morning ; and above all, for the Hope and Prospect of a glorious Immortality. O my Soul ! bless the Lord, and all that's within me bless his holy Name ; bless the Lord, O my Soul ! and forget not all, or any of his Benefits : Lord, may I not only speak, but live thy Praise.

† But, O my God ! how have I requited thee † Confession of Sin.  
Evil for Good ? what unsuitable Returns have I made for that Goodness and Mercy of thine, that has follow'd me all my Days ? I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my Face before thee, O God ; for mine Iniquities are increased over mine Head : and my Trespas is grown up to the Heavens : Lord, I would lie in the Dust, smite on the Breast, and cry unclean, unclean. ~~I~~ own, O Lord, I am the Seed of evil Doers ; have a sinful, sinning Na-

---

\* This must be left out, or varied, as the Case of Persons may by them be apprehended to require.



ture, and my Life hitherto has been stain'd with many actual Transgressions: *By one Man's Disobedience many, all were made Sinners*; and I among the rest: *I was shapen in Iniquity, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me.* And how soon did this Fountain of Heart-Corruption issue forth, and shew itself in suitable Streams; my first Grapes were wild Grapes: how much of that Folly have I experienced, that's bound up in the Heart of a Child? The Imagination of my Heart has been evil from my Youth; I have been a Transgressor even from the Womb, going astray as soon as born: How early did Pride, Anger, Envy, Revenge, unruly Appetite, Self-Will, and other head-strong Corruptions break forth and appear in my Life? I was soon, too soon, wise to do Evil, but alas to do Good I had no Knowledge! Oh! remember not the Sins of my Youth, nor my Transgressions, but according to thy Mercy remember me for thy Goodness Sake. And, O Lord, have I not reason to say that my Guilt has increased with many Years? I have walked very much in the Way of my own Heart, and in the Sight of my Eyes: I have not improved my Time, Talents, Means of Grace, and Opportunities of serving and enjoying my God, as I ought. Oh! how many the Sins of my Thoughts, Desires, Affections, Words, Actions; how many my Omissions and Commisions: how many the Sins of my common Converse, how great the Iniquity of my holy Things? How defective have I been in the Duty of the Closet, the Assembly, and the Family; how many unmortified Lusts have I yet to complain of? How great my Pride, Passion, and Worldliness? I have thought of myself above what is meet; have not govern'd my own Spirit, but Anger has rested in my Bosom, and the Sun many a time gone

gone down on my Wrath: My Conversation has not been without Covetousness: I have indulg'd the Flesh, and made Provision for it to fulfil the Lusts thereof: I have profan'd thy Name, thy Day, thine Ordinances; have made light of Christ, grieved thy Spirit, done Dispite to him: I have violated the Laws of Justice, Truth, Chastity, Meekness and Love: I have not kept myself from mine Iniquity, but have often repeated my Folly and Guilt, ~~particularly in the Instance of~~ \* And, O my God! how deeply aggravated are all my Sins? they are against Light and Conviction, against Promises, Vows, manifold Experience; against great Grace and Love. Oh! cast an Eye of Pity upon me; I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I am all over as an unclean Thing: As a Fountain casteth out her Waters, so hath my Heart cast out Wickedness. Lord, I abhor myself, and repent in Dust and Ashes: Who can understand his Errors? *Cleanse thou me from secret Faults.*

† And as my Sins are many, so my Necessities are many and great: Lord, I come to thee for a Supply; I come for a Blessing, a suitable and effectual Blessing. Bless me, O my God! with that great Blessing, the Pardon of all Iniquity; let my Transgression be forgiven, and my Sin covered; impute not Iniquity unto me; blot out as a Cloud my Transgressions, and as a thick Cloud my Sins. Oh! *Purge me with Hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than Snow:* I have no Merit to plead, but cast myself upon thy Sovereign Mercy in the Redeemer; thou hast declared thyself the Lord *Gracious, Merciful, Long-suffering,*

† Petition  
for Sup-  
plies.

\* Here it will be proper to name (in your secret Devotion) the particular Sin you are most addicted to, and for which Conscience ofteneſt rebukes you.

*abundant in Goodness and Truth; keeping Mercy for Thousands, forgiving Iniquity, Transgression and Sin: Oh! may I experience that Bounty and Grace that is thy very Nature! I am miserable, but 'tis my Encouragement I have to do with a God of Mercy: I have sinned, but Christ has died. Oh! justify me freely by thy Grace, thro' the Redemption that is in Christ. Lord, I plead the Blood of Atonement, accept me in the Beloved: And, O heal and sanctify this sinful Nature of mine! help me to put off the Old Man which is corrupt, and to put on the new Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness; create a clean Heart, and renew a right Spirit within me: Help me to crucify the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts; that the Body of Sin may be destroy'd, and henceforth I may not serve Sin: Enlighten my Mind, and grant me the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of Christ; Open thou mine Eyes, that I may see wondrous things out of thy Law; teach me thy Statutes, and order my Steps in thy Word; so that I may be filled with the Knowledge of thy Will, in all Wisdom and spiritual Understanding: Subdue my Will, overcome the Enmity thereof; cast down lofty Imaginations, and bring every Thought into Subjection to the Obedience of Christ; make me willing in the Day of thy Power; help me to set my Affections on Things above, and not on Things on the Earth: Give me a faithful Conscience, an Heart that will smite when I do Evil; make my Memory ready and strong in divine Things: And oh! that it may be furnish'd therewith; that the Word of Christ may dwell richly in me in all Wisdom. Oh! let all old Things be done away, and all Things become new: let the God of Peace sanctify me wholly; grant that my whole Spirit, Soul and Body, may be preserv'd blameless*

blameless to the Coming of Christ. O my God! hear my Requests herein; hast thou not promised thou wilt give thy *holy Spirit to those who ask it*; I plead thy Promise; *be it unto thy Servant according to thy Word*. Let thy Spirit dwell in me, as a Spirit of Grace; grant me the constant Supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ; furnish me with all divine Grace, and farther Degrees thereof: May I give all Diligence, and add to my Faith Virtue, to Virtue Knowledge, to Knowledge Temperance, to Temperance Patience, to Patience Godliness, and to Godliness brotherly Kindness, and to brotherly Kindness Charity. Oh! may these Things be in me, and abound, that I may neither be barren nor unfruitful in the Knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Grant me all the Fruits and Graces of thy Spirit, and fulfil the Work of Faith, of Hope, of Love, and of every other Grace with Power. Help me to flee youthful Lusts; make me sober-minded; help me to put on the whole Armour of God, that I may stand against the Wiles of the Devil; may withstand in the evil Day, and having done all, be able to stand: Keep me from the Evil of this World, give me that Faith which will overcome it: Help me to consider one Thing is needful, and chuse the good Part, that shall not be taken from me: May I seek first the Kingdom of God, and the Righteousness thereof; and whilst so many say, who will shew us any Good; let it be the constant Language of my Soul, *Lord, lift up the Light of thy Countenance upon me*; this will put Gladness into my Heart. Teach me my Duty in all the Parts of it; may I be compleat in all the Will of God, and walk in all the Statutes and Ordinances of the Lord blameless. Help me to discharge my Duty towards my several Relations, whether Superior, Inferior, or Equals: Help me to love my Neighbour as my-



self; to do to others as I would they do to me; may I walk uprightly, speak the Truth in my Heart, not backbite with my Tongue, nor take up a Reproach against my Neighbour: Cloath me with Humility, give me the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, and grant I may shew all Meekness towards all Men: That I may do Justice, love Mercy, and walk humbly with my God: Help me to love my Enemies, and if I have ought against any Man, to forgive, as God for Christ's sake forgiveth us; to bless them that curse me, and pray for them that despitefully use me; that I may appear to be one of the Children of God, who maketh his Sun to shine on the Evil and on the Good, and sendeth Rain on the Just and on the Unjust. Oh! that herein I may *be perfect, as my Father in Heaven is perfect*. Help me duly to consider my latter End, often to think of Death and Eternity: I would not presume of long Life, and talk of Goods laid up for many Years, of Pleasures and Diversions for many Years; when it may be this Night my Soul shall be required of me. Lord, teach me to number my Days, to hasten my Preparation for dying: and whatever my Hand finds to do, to do it *now*, without Delay, and do it with all my Might; for there is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledge in the Grave whither I am going. Oh! that I may not trust to a Death-bed Repentance; nor defer the great Work of Religion to old Age; but grant I may *remember my Creator in the Days of my Youth, while the evil Days come not, nor the Years draw nigh, when I shall say, and find, I have no Pleasure in them*. Lord, all my Wants are known to thee, all my Desire is before thee; grant me my Petitions, and let thy Grace be sufficient for me.

\* Intercession for others,

\* And as thou dost require that Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and giving of Thanks, be made

made for all Men, which is good and acceptable in the Sight of God our Saviour, I would humbly recommend the Case of others to thee. Shower down, O Lord, thy Blessings upon the Inhabitants of this World: *May thy Way be known upon Earth, and thy Salvation unto all Nations. Let all the People praise thee, O Lord, yea let all the People praise thee*; give thy Son *the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the utmost Part of the Earth for his Possession*; bring in the Fulness of the Gentiles, that all Israel may be saved: Look down in a special Manner upon this Land; be a Wall of Fire about us, and the Glory in the midst of us. Bless the King, and all in Authority under him, that thy People may lead a quiet and peaceable Life in all Godliness and Honesty. Bless the Ministers of thy Word; Lord, make them faithful and successful, cloath them with Salvation and Success, that thy Saints may shout for Joy; especially bless those under whose Ministry I am placed; bless them in their Bodies, Souls, Studies and Ministrations: Oh! may they come to us who hear them in the fulness of the Blessing of the Gospel of Christ; enable them always to speak the Things that become sound Doctrine; and Lord help me to profit by their Endeavours. Oh! may I be one of those who shall be their Joy and Crown of rejoicing in the Presence of Jesus Christ, at his Coming; open my Heart as thou didst *Lydia's*, that I may attend to the Things that are spoken by them. Bless my Parents (or Family where I dwell) make an Hedge about them, about their House, and all that they have on every Side; let thy Candle shine on their Tabernacle; continue their Life and Health, and faithful Endeavours for my Good; and Lord make me a Comfort to them: Oh! may I be their rejoicing, may they see me walking in the Truth; may I not prove one

of those foolish Children, that is the Heaviness of his Father and Mother : bleſs all my Relations, Friends, Acquaintance ; bleſs them with all good Things, eſpecially with all ſpiritual Bleſſings in Chriſt Jeſus ; graciously pity the afflicted, relieve and help them, [particularly, &c. \*] ſuccour the tempted, provide for the Poor, and be a preſent Help to all in Time of Trouble : May the Grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with their Spirit.

† The De-  
dication  
and Sur-  
render.

† And wilt thou, O my God ! accept a poor Creature that has been lying at thy Foot, pleading for Mercy ? I am thine by many Engagements ; thy Servant, the Son of thy Handmaid, devoted to thee in my Infancy ; I believe it was a wiſe and good Choice my Parents made when they choſe thee for my God : I deſire to ſtand to that Choice, and as I have † been often attempting to give up myſelf to thee, and have profeſſed to chuſe thee for my God : Lord, I would do it over again, renew and confirm my Choice ; and with a fuller and more perfect Conſent avouch thee as my God : Lord, to thee I reſign and devote myſelf, Soul, Body, Time, all I have and am ; I would renounce every Luſt, hate every falſe Way, be thine, only, entirely, and for ever thine. Accept this Heart of mine, O Lord, dead and carnal as it is ; thou canſt change it, and fit it for thy Service. O come and take full Poſſeſſion of my Soul ; admit me under thy Protection, gather me under thy Wing, let me dwell in thy ſecret Place ; keep me from the Evil of this World ; help me to ſet the Lord always before me ; be thou at my right Hand, and I ſhall not be moved : Lord, I am thine, ſave me.

\* Here mention the Caſe of any one you know in Affliction, and recommend it to God.  
† This muſt be left out or alter'd by thoſe that can't truly ſay ſo.

\* And now, O Lord, what wait I for? my Hope is in thee. Let thine Eyes be open unto the Supplication of thy Servant: Thou art the God that hearest Prayer, and therefore I come unto thee. O forgive the Iniquity of my holy Things; let all my Thanksgivings, Confessions and Petitions, be accepted and answered: Accept my Acknowledgments for

\* The  
Conclu-  
on.

[To be added at Morning.]

the Mercy of the Night; blessed be God I laid me down and slept, and thou madest me to dwell in Safety; take Care of me through this Day, fit me for all the Duty, Work, and Trials of every Day, and for my last Day.

[To be added at Night.]

the Mercy of this Day; that no Evil has befallen me in it. O pardon the Sin of the Day in my Thoughts, Words, and Actions; take me under thy Protection this Night: I would lay me down and sleep; do thou sustain me, raise me in the Morning, and when I awake, may I be still with thee.

All which I beg in the Name, and thro' the Mediation of the Lord Jesus, who has taught us to pray after this Manner, saying, *Our Father which art, &c.*

I have already said, I don't intend this as a stated Plan, much less as a Form. I can't think it advisable for the Christian *always* to pray in this Manner, in his Closet; much less in these precise Words. It may, however, be useful as an Introduction to Prayer, exhibiting the whole in its several Parts and Order; and being mostly in Words of Scripture, may not only direct us to Method, but furnish with Matter and Expressions; I mean it may do so sometimes, and with respect to some Persons. Others don't need such Prescriptions and Rules, and would suffer by the Confinement of them; and therefore I add,

7<sup>thly</sup>,



7<sup>thly</sup>, That the most perfect Manner of Prayer is very much above, not only Forms, but any Rules of Method, and is directed and conducted by the present Frame and Bent of the Mind; and so is *extempore* in more Respects than one; proceeding *pro re natâ*, according to particular Occasions, without being confined to any stated, prescribed Words, Order or Matter. Sometimes the devout Christian dwells, and expatiates upon a few Particulars, that his Circumstances point out to him, and summon his Attention to, and that his present Frame leads him to. As Supply for a Duty and Service, now before him, and which his Heart is much set upon. 'Tis not enough to mention this *incidentally* in his Petitions; but the main of his Prayer, and often of all his Prayers, for Days or Weeks, runs upon it. At another Time, Help against this or that Infirmary, Deliverance from an eminent Trial, commands his Prayer; like the *Apostle*, who besought the Lord *thrice, that the Thorn in the Flesh, the Messenger of Satan, might*

2 Cor. xii. *depart from him.* Sometimes eminent Favours in Providence, outward Deliverances, great Enlargements, Assistances, and Improvement in Religion, draw out, and engage the Affections in an extraordinary Manner, and supply the Prayer for a considerable while: Not that other Heads of Prayer are wholly neglected; but this is the predominant Subject; as it fills the Heart, so it in a great Measure fills the Prayer. Sometimes Intercession for others has the like Interest and Stroke in our Prayers. Christ seems to have a special Reference to his Disciples, the Difficulty and Success of their Office, in the Prayer he was engaged in: *He went out into a Mountain to pray, and continued all Night in the Oratory of God.* It follows in the next Verse, that *when it was*

Luke vi.  
12.

was Day he called unto him his Disciples, and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named Apostles. Before he sent them forth into the World, upon such an important, difficult Service, he recommends them to God in a Night of solemn Prayer. His Prayer, I reckon, was mostly Intercession; which is sometimes the Case of some of his Followers, of them especially, that are blessed with the most abundant Measures of the Spirit of Supplication, and have their Minds enriched with a large Portion of divine Zeal and Love: They are not so taken up with the Concerns of their own Souls, as to overlook the Concerns of others, especially the high and dear Interests of the Church of God. The *Apostle* pray'd *Night and Day* exceedingly for the *Theffalonians*, and remember'd <sup>1 Theff. iii.</sup> *Timothy* without ceasing in his Prayers <sup>10.</sup> *Day and Night*. Many such devout Intercessors there have <sup>2 Tim. i.</sup> been, and I doubt not still are, who have their <sup>3.</sup> Hours and Days of Supplication for the Church, and for particular Persons, one while wrestling with God, like *Monica*, the Mother of *Austin*, for the Conversion of this or that Son, or other Relation; another while pleading for farther, special, seasonable Blessings. A good Man used to have a stated Evening every Week, set apart to pray for his Children and Family; nor was his Labour in vain in the Lord.

Sometimes the Faculties being more than ordinarily excited and raised, and the Force of them drawn out and united upon these particular Occasions, the Soul is carried upon the Wings of holy Affections (I may add, often of the holy Spirit) above prescrib'd Rules, for either Matter, Order, or Expression. It has an higher and more noble Furniture: Such Things as might be Helps to others, and at other Times would be impertinent  
now,

now, not only useless, but an Embarrassment and Hinderance. Several Instances might be given of this more devout Frame of Soul, and of the Manner in which it expresses itself. I have read of a Person, that under more than common Impressions of Religion, would begin a Prayer, and after half a Quarter, or a Quarter of an Hour upon the Knees, would fall prostrate on the Face, to which he found an Inclination too strong to be resisted; and thus he continued in the Time of Retirement for Months, spending Part of the Time on his Knees, and Part in a low Prostration. A Soul in this Posture is unquestionably above common Rules; to confine him to a Form, would be like fettering a Racer, or fastening the Mountain Eagle to a Log of Wood. The Voice is here sometimes wholly suppressed; there are many silent Parentheses with Sighs, Groans, and Tears; which are so far from interrupting the Prayer, that they carry it on with the greatest Vigour and Life. And this I reckon an higher Form of Devotion, and the most perfect Manner of Prayer in the Oratory.

I can't, I profess, agree with a learned Person, the late Author of *the Religion of Nature*. Having endeavour'd to prove it better to pronounce a Prayer, than only to think it over, since the very Sound of the Words affect us; "He adds\*, It being  
 " found that we must make use of Words, it can't  
 " be denied that we ought to use the best and pro-  
 " perest we can. This can't be done in extem-  
 " poraneous Effusions, and therefore there must  
 " be Forms premeditated, the best we are capable  
 " of making or procuring, if we would worship  
 " God to the best of our Capacity——Every  
 " Thing ought to be expressed with Method, in  
 " Phrases that are grave and pointing, and with  
 " such a true Eloquence, as engages all our Atten-  
 " tion;

"tion; and represents our deepest Sense without  
 "Affectation, or needless Repetitions. These  
 "Considerations have caused me many times to  
 "wonder at those Men, who dispute against pre-  
 "conceived Forms of Prayer. They who talk so  
 "much of the Spirit of Prayer, seem to know  
 "but little of it." So common is it for the grea-  
 "test Men, Masters of Reasoning and Demonstra-  
 "tion in Things they have been conversant with,  
 "to talk at Random in Things they know not, and  
 "have never tried. Devout Minds, often at least,  
 "need not Words, *grave and pointing*, to excite  
 "their Affections; they bring their Affections with  
 "them to the Duty, and these will command Words  
 "as proper as is necessary: Or if their Affections  
 "are to be excited and kindled in the Duty, 'tis  
 "from something higher and more divine than  
 "fine Phrases. Not to say that the Art of Words,  
 "and the Sound in pronouncing them, which this  
 "Gentleman thinks an Advantage in secret Prayer,  
 "only tends to excite, what has been so often con-  
 "demn'd as *mechanical Affection*. In short, some  
 "may need the Help of Forms, Rules of Method,  
 "and a Supply of Matter; others are above them.  
 "And I apprehend, the most divine Manner of  
 "Prayer has least of these Things in it. I beg  
 "Leave to subjoin a Passage or two from a lear-  
 "ned \* Bishop. "As there is one Sort of Prayer, \* Life of  
 "wherein we make use of the Voice, which is God in the  
 "necessary in publick, and may sometimes have Soul of  
 "its own Advantages in private; and another Man, p.  
 "wherein, though we utter no Sound, yet we 97.  
 "conceive the Expressions, and form the Words,  
 "as it were, in our Minds; so there is a third  
 "and more sublime Kind of Prayer, wherein the  
 "Soul takes an higher Flight; and having col-  
 "lected all its Forces by long and serious Medi-  
 "tations, it darteth itself, if I may so speak, to-  
 "wards



“wards God in Sighs and Groans, and Thoughts,  
 “too big for Expression: As when after a deep  
 “Contemplation of the divine Perfection, appear-  
 “ing in all his Works of Wonder, it addresseth  
 “itself to him in the profoundest Adoration of  
 “his Majesty and Glory: Or, when after sad Re-  
 “flections on its Vileness and Miscarriages, it pro-  
 “strates itself before him, with the greatest Con-  
 “fusion and Sorrow, not daring to lift up its  
 “Eyes, or utter one Word in his Presence: Or,  
 “when having well consider’d the Beauty of Ho-  
 “liness, and the unspeakable Felicity of those that  
 “are truly good, it panteth after God, and send-  
 “eth up such vigorous and ardent Desires, as no  
 “Words can sufficiently express. This Mental  
 “Prayer is of all other the most effectual to puri-  
 “fy the Soul, and may be termed the great Secret  
 “of Devotion, and one of the most powerful In-  
 “struments of the divine Life; and it may be, the  
 “*Apostle* hath a peculiar Respect unto it, when  
 “he saith, *That the Spirit helpeth our Infirmitie,*  
 “*making Intercession for us with Groanings that can-*  
 “*not be uttered;* or as the Original may bear,  
 “*that cannot be worded.* A few of these inward  
 “Aspirations will do more than a great many  
 “fluent and melting Expressions.” I mention  
 this not as the common Attainment of Chri-  
 stians (though ’tis attainable, and what some have,  
 at times, attained); but as an Instance of the more  
 sublime, perfect Devotions, transcending not on-  
 ly Forms, but all Rules, which yet ordinarily,  
 and to some may have their Use.

8<sup>thly</sup>, Whatever Variety there may be in the  
 Matter, Method, and external Manner of Prayer,  
 all true, acceptable, successful Prayer is perform’d  
 by the Assistance and Influence of the holy Spi-  
 rit. His Concern and Interest in this Duty is ex-  
 pressed in several Scriptures, and imply’d in more.

As

As *Rom.* iii. 26. *Gal.* iv. 6. *Eph.* vi. 18. *Jude* 20. I know some interpret these Texts so as to leave the present Church little or no Interest in them, placing the Help of the Spirit in Prayer, here spoken of, among the *Charismata*, or extraordinary Gifts of the primitive Church; and that were peculiar to the Age of Inspiration: But I am persuaded these Expositors will find a large Body of Christians pleading against them, not only from the Laws of Interpretation, but from their own Experience, and that as long as the Church endures. The Remark of an ingenious Writer is not impertinent here. “ \* That the Gift of Prayer \* *Watts's*  
 “ is not expressed among the extraordinary Gifts, *Guide to*  
 “ either *Joel* ii. or *Acts* ii. where the Prophecy of *Prayer, p.*  
 “ *Joel* is accomplish’d: Nor is it mention’d parti- *175.*  
 “ cularly in the Epistles of *St Paul*, among the  
 “ miraculous Gifts of the holy Spirit, in those  
 “ Places where they are enumerated; indeed the  
 “ Gift of Prayer is an unknown Tongue, seems  
 “ to be spoken of *1 Cor.* xiv. but that refers to the  
 “ Gift of Tongues rather than to the Gift of  
 “ Prayer. And ’tis not unlikely that the Omissi-  
 “ on of the Gift of Prayer (or praying in the Spi-  
 “ rit) in those Texts where the extraordinary Gifts  
 “ are reckon’d up, was with Design to intimate,  
 “ this is none of them.” Nor do I think what he  
 adds (*p.* 177.) groundless. “ I confess, saith he,  
 “ the holy Spirit hath been, in a great Measure,  
 “ so long departed from his Churches, that we are  
 “ tempted to think all his Operations in Prayer,  
 “ Preaching, &c. belong only to the first Ages  
 “ of Christianity: And it was from this Absence  
 “ of the Spirit that Men proceeded to invent va-  
 “ rious Methods to supply the Want of him in  
 “ Prayer, by *Pater Nosters*, *Beads*, *Litanies*, &c.  
 “ and other Forms, some good, some bad; to  
 “ which they confin’d the Churches to keep up  
 “ the

† In Euty-  
chii Alex-  
and. Orig.  
p. 42, 43.

“ the Form of Worship, and the Attention of the “ People.” When the *Schechina* of the Spirit, the inward Beauty, Strength and Glory of the Church, was in a great Measure withdrawn, Men substituted an Image in its Room to supply its Place. The learned *Selden* undertakes to prove †, that the *Jews* had no Form of Prayer before *Ezra*’s Time, and that he, and the Elders with him, composed them a Form, consisting of Eighteen Benedictions. Nor can I discern any tolerable Evidence of the Use of Forms in the first Ages of the Christian Church, till after the Apostacy began, and the Glory, the holy *Paraclete*, had in a great Degree, departed from *Israel*.

But I am not here to run out into a Controversy ; nor would I be thought to insinuate that the divine Spirit doth never afford his Assistance in the Use of Forms, I am far from thinking so. I believe all good Men pray by the Spirit more or less, whether with, or without Forms ; and that some have more of the Spirit *with Forms*, than others *without them* (tho’ I reckon his Help, if attended to, would ordinarily set Christians above them). What I am pleading for at present is, that there is an Assistance of the Spirit to be expected in the Duty of Prayer ; that this is necessary, and that it should be the Endeavour of good Men to secure it in all their Addresses to God. Wherein it lies, how it may be discerned, the different Measures of it to different Persons, or to the same Persons at different times, with other Things which concern the full Explication of the Subject, must not now be inquir’d into. I shall only just touch a few Particulars with Reference to it (the Spirit’s Help in Prayer) without Enlargement.

1<sup>st</sup>, He prescribes the Rules and Laws of Prayer, furnishes us with our *Rubrick*, as I may express it.

2<sup>dly</sup>, He

2<sup>dly</sup>, The holy Spirit works in us those Graces, and that Temper of Mind, by which we answer our Rule in some Measure: He's the Author of the Faith, Love, Humility, Repentance, Charity, Resignation, Dependence and Importunity, and all the gracious Dispositions he requires in Prayer: He has indited the Rule of Prayer, and he sets the Heart to it, forms it to a Correspondence therewith.

3<sup>dly</sup>, He stirs up the Gift of God in us, excites his own Graces, and helps us to exercise them suitably to the Subject before us, the different Matter of our Prayer. This is so well represented by good Mr *Watts*, that I shall borrow a Paragraph from him, and therein express my own Sense. “\* He \*Guideto  
 “ spiritualizes our natural Affections, and fixes Prayer, p.  
 “ them on proper Objects, and enlarges and en- 197.  
 “ lightens their natural Activity. When Sin is  
 “ recollected, he awakens Anger, Shame and  
 “ Sorrow; when God is represented to the Mind  
 “ in his Glory and Justice, he overspreads the Soul  
 “ with holy Awe and humble Fear. When the  
 “ Lord Jesus and his Redemption are upon the  
 “ Thoughts, the holy Spirit warms and raises  
 “ our Desire and Love. We are in ourselves  
 “ cold and dead to spiritual Things; he makes us  
 “ lively in Prayer, and holds us to the Work;  
 “ he begets holy Reverence of God, while we a-  
 “ dore him; he works in us delight in God, and  
 “ longing Desires after him; Fervency and Im-  
 “ portunity in our Petitions for spiritual Mer-  
 “ cies, Submission and Resignation to the Will  
 “ of God in temporal Things; Faith in our  
 “ Lord Jesus Christ, and Hope in the Promises of  
 “ the Gospel, while we plead with God for an An-  
 “ swer to our Prayers. He also fills us with holy  
 “ Joy and Exultation in God, while we recol-  
 “ lect in Prayer his Glories, or his Benefits, and  
 “ awakens all the Springs of Thanksgiving.” In



short, he sanctifieth both Heart and Frame ; by the first Work he gives the fundamental, habitual Principles of Prayer, and by the other, a present Disposition and Fitness for it. *We know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit helpeth our*

Rom. viii. *Infirmities.*

26.

4<sup>thly</sup>, The Spirit's Assistance, especially in the actual Performance of the Duty, is with great Variety : Some have less Measures of praying Graces from him, as a Spirit of Sanctification, than others; and less of his Concurrence and Excitation when engaged in Prayer. Oftentimes his Assistance is in a calm, even Way, without remarkable Improvement and Alteration of Frame ; so that his Operations are not easily distinguish'd from the Operations of our own Faculties, with which they are always in Conjunction, which, it may be, is the more common Case of Christians. Sometimes He assists in a more eminent, *sensible* Manner, helps our Infirmities, and makes Intercession for us with Groanings, that cannot be uttered. He elevates the Mind, fixes the Attention, draws out the Affections, and gives that Freedom and Enlargement of Soul, that sets us quite above ourselves at other times. And when this more special Assistance is afforded, it generally brings it's own Evidence along with it ; as we are conscious to, and feel the Acts of our own Minds, so we can't but perceive the different Modes of them, all their Improvements and Degrees of Perfection. Nor do I question but some devout Persons know as certainly that God is sometimes present by his Spirit, and at other times absent, as they know the Sun shines, when they see it's Light, and enjoy it's Influence. They know it by inward Perception and Sensation ; which tho' it can't be explained to Strangers, is certain to themselves. Sometimes the Spirit directs to the  
Matter

Matter of Prayer, not only teaching us in general what Thing we ought, in our stated Addresses, to pray for; but leading us to insist on particular Blessings, as specially adapted to our present Case; or to such Duties and Difficulties as lye before us in Providence; which, tho' we do not foresee, the Intercessor in the Heart doth, and hereby puts us upon laying in Provision against the Day of Trial; when we also better know the Mind and Meaning of the Spirit in such Excitations, and see how seasonable the Importunity was we were led to. If any call this Enthusiasm, &c. I can bear their Censures; but shall not be ashamed to own and plead for what I take to be Matter, not only of certain and solid Experience, but of considerable Importance, because there are found some, that know nothing of such Things, and dispise them.

5<sup>thly</sup>, The general and common Effect of the Spirit's Assistance in Prayer, is the acceptable and profitable Performance of the Duty. Without those Graces he's the Author of, we can't pray to any Purpose (*i. e.*) without Faith, Humility, Repentance, upright Intention, &c. and without the actuating them by his present Influence, our Prayers will, in a great Measure, be dull and formal, tho' I don't say hypocritical, and altogether in vain. The Effect of the higher Assistance mentioned, is a divine Ability for the Duty, Solemnity and Seriousness of Frame; inward Comfort, and often holy Joy and Triumph of Soul. This is what good Men, especially the more devout, sometimes have, but not always. Few or none, I believe, can pretend to it: They are never destitute of the Spirit's Help, so far as to want all praying Graces in the Habit; but they may want his more special, immediate Assistance and Influence; so that the Work goes heavily on; their Chariot Wheels

are taken off; they find and feel themselves under Disability, in Part; and that they cannot go forth as at other times: And tho' I am far from thinking the Obligation to the Duty now ceases, and that they ought not, or need not pray; yet unquestionably, whilst in these Circumstances, the Service will be low and *human*, have little of God in it, and consequently little Life and Comfort.

How to attain the actual Concurrence and Assistance of the Spirit, in the discharge of the Duty of Prayer: how to preserve it, improve it, and recover it when lost, and the like, are Questions that well deserve Consideration, but must not here be meddled with. Nor must I farther enlarge, but leave these Hints with the Reader, which I hope will appear to him of too great Moment to be quite neglected. As we are to pray *always, with all Prayer and Supplication, so always in the Spirit.* This we should endeavour: Our Infirmities will be the fewer and less, and the less prejudicial, if the Spirit help them. Let us look up to God for his Spirit, as for other Purposes, so to assist us in our constant Devotions: supplying us for them, and conducting us through them. The more we depend on the Intercessor within our own Hearts, and the Intercessor above, before the Throne, the better we shall succeed in our Supplications. Let us therefore wait for the promise of the Father, and often plead it, *That he will give the holy Spirit to them that ask him.*

Eph. vi.  
18.

Luke xi.  
13.

I might inforce this Branch of Closet Religion with a great many Arguments; but the Reader, that has been tired with so many long Discourses already, will excuse the Omission of them. I must refer him to such Authors as professedly, and at large, treat on the Subject; and if he be serious and experienc'd, I may refer him to his own Heart, which

which can say so much in Behalf of this Exercise, that he will not easily be prevailed with by any Temptations to neglect it.

'Tis a Part of that Homage every reasonable Creature owes to God; an expression of our Dependence upon him, and Obligations to him; and as perform'd in *secret*, is a direct Acknowledgment of his Omniscience and Omnipresence, and thereby gives him the Honour of those Perfections.

'Tis a Law and Duty of natural Religion, arising out of the Principle of Nature, and necessarily resulting from the Relation we stand in to God, as the Author and Maintainer of our Beings, and the Fountain of all our Comforts; and therefore is not so much enacted and appointed in Scripture, as supposed there; which yet frequently mentions it, and prescribes Rules concerning it.

'Tis recommended to us by many great and eminent Examples; as that of the Lord and High Priest of our Possession, *Luke vi. 12. Mark i. 35. of David Psal. lv. 17; of Daniel, Chap. vi. 10.* To which I might add a Cloud of Witnesses; indeed all that have gone to Heaven, or are in the Way to it: Could we peruse the Register of the Faithful, from the Beginning of Time, it would be found an eminent Stroke in their Character, *that they were Men of Prayer, and had the Spirit of Supplication.* The Angel in *St John's Vision*, offered *Incense with the Prayers of all Saints.*

All the Saints dealt in Prayers, and pray *with all Prayer and Supplication*; secret, as well as other kind of Prayer, and generally most of all with that.

The Principle of divine Life often, *first*, exerts itself in solemn, serious Prayer, and it constantly works the same Way, and directs the Eyes upwards to the Throne of God, till the Soul is safe-

Rev. viii.

3.

Eph. vi.

18.

Acts ix.

11.



Zechar.  
xii. 10.

ly lodged in Heaven. *The Spirit of Grace* is also a Spirit of Supplication.

Mark i.  
35.  
Matth.  
xiv. 23.

Eph. vi.  
18.

I might observe, that the Occasions of the Christian require his constant Attendance to this Duty. Some have thought one Reason why our Lord, when he prayed, withdrew from his Disciples, and prayed *alone*, was because his Case and theirs so much differed, that the same Strain of Devotion would not suit both. He had some Things to ask, they could not join in; and 'tis likely, some Things say it was not fit they should hear; and therefore he retired for Prayer. 'Tis so with the Christian: He has Necessities, Complaints, many Cases to lay before God, that are not proper for the Cognizance of the dearest Friends on Earth. Here he may unbosom himself with a Fervour and Freedom, that publick Prayer doth not admit of. The Devout know what I mean, and certainly he must be but a poor Christian that knows nothing of it. 'Tis one of the most necessary Instruments of Religion; it helps us to use our spiritual Armour, and contributes not a little to our Success in our Warfare, compared with the Context. It derives Strength and Ability from above, for the Performance of other Duties, and communicates Life and Vigour to them. I reckon it Matter of common Experience among good Men, that they find themselves more or less disposed, and fit for their respective Duties and Services, according as their Diligence, Constancy, and Seriousness in secret Prayer, is more or less. No other Prayer, or kind of Devotion can supply the Want of this, or indeed well subsist without it. It opens Heaven, and draws down the choicest Blessings. The Answers of secret Prayer, which devout Souls can attest, some in a common Way, some extraordinary,

traordinary, would fill a Volume. To conclude, 'tis a Means of the purest, sublimest Pleasure, we are capable of in this Life. Thousands experience this; have that Access to God, and Intercourse with him in their secret Devotions; feel that inward Composure, Gladness, and Triumph of Soul, especially in their best Frames, that all the Gratifications of the Sensualist are — What shall I say? sordid and vile compared therewith. 'Tis indeed a Disgrace to make any Comparison.

Reader, live no longer a Stranger to thy own truest Interest, Happiness, and Comfort: Let nothing keep thee out of thy Closet, and off thy Knees. Prayer is our best Weapon, and greatest Consolation in all our Troubles; the Defence and Retreat of the Soul in Time of Danger: *David* found it so in the particular Difficulties he complains of, *For my Love, they are my Adversaries; but I give myself to Prayer.* In short, Prayer is our best Employment, suitable and necessary in every State and Condition, and should have a large Place in our daily, constant Devotion. As Praise is the predominant, peculiar Work of the Church in Heaven, Prayer seems to be so of the Church on Earth. Let us therefore attend to it, be stedfast, and always abound in this Work of the Lord; *enter into our Closet, and pray to our Father who is in secret, and our Father who seeth in secret, will reward us openly.*

Psal. cix.  
4

Matth. vi.  
6.

## SECT. XIII.

*Of Psalmody, as a Duty of the Closet or Oratory.*

5<sup>thly</sup>, I Know not how to close the Subject about the Duties of Retirement, without mentioning an Exercise, which how unusual soever it may be, yet I can't think it unsuitable to the Closet, viz. *Psalmody*. I mean by *Psalmody*, the singing of Psalms; not aloud, for that can't become Retirement and Secrecy: Nor yet is it merely mental Singing that I intend; but singing with the Voice, a low, suppressed Voice, by which we may go thro' all the Notes of a Tune with as much Advantage as if we sung never so loud, as any one may be convinced that will make the Experiment. We may either make use of the Psalms of *David*, or Hymns of *Human Composure*; or sometimes the one, and sometimes the other, as we find the Matter of either most suitable to our present Case, Circumstances and Frame.

The Duty needs no Explication; and as I design little more than a bare Proposal of it, I shall neither offer Directions to assist the Practice of it, nor enlarge on Motives to enforce it. It comes recommended to us by the Example of the first Professors of the Christian Religion, and obtained very much at a Time, when the Zeal and Devotion of the Church were warmest. We find *Paul* and *Silas* hymnizing and solacing themselves with *Psalmody* in secret, when a Prison was their Oratory. Indeed *Psalmody* was the great Entertainment

tainment of the Devout in the Primitive Church. Many of them committed the whole Psalter to Heart; and instead of *Satanic* *and* *the* Devil's Songs, as St *Chrysostom* calls them, such as infect the Mind and Imagination, they employ'd themselves in reciting spiritual Hymns and divine Composes, which tended to purify and improve the Mind. *Socrates* \* faith of *Theodosius* the younger, \* *Cave's* that he could exactly repeat the holy Scripture, and that rising early every Morning, he used to sing *Primitive Christian,* Praises to God. And *Jerome* speaking of *Bethlehem*, where he lived, and which he so much extols in his Letter to *Marcella*, faith, you could not go into the Field, but you would here the Plowman at his Hallelujahs, the Mower at his Hymns, and the Vinedresser singing *David's* Psalms. *Clement Alexandrinus* recommends Psalms and Hymns, as proper before we go to Bed. Many more Testimonies might be produc'd to the same Purpose. Psalmody, faith Dr *Hammond* †, made up a very † *Pref. to Paraph. on Psal.* great Part of the Christian's Devotions, both in the publick Assembly, and more privately in the Family, in their Retirements in the Closet, and in their waking Beds.

How great the Advantage of the Exercise would be, I had rather your Experience should tell you than any Discourse of mine. I have mention'd it with a Desire, that the Reader would make Trial, if he be yet unacquainted with it. We are exhorted to be filled with the Spirit, *speaking to our selves in Psalms and Hymns, and spiritual Songs, making Melody in our Hearts unto the Lord.* Eph. v. We should speak to ourselves, when alone in 18, 19. Psalms and Hymns, exciting and stirring up divine Affections thereby; we should often do it at other Times, and especially in our Oratory, making the Exercise a stated Part of our Devotion there.



there. We may sometimes sing the Psalm we have been reading, and been bestowing Reflections upon; or any other Psalm or Hymn that we think more suitable: nor shall we want proper Matter to supply our Devotion, when we have been a little accustom'd to the Service. The Profit and Pleasure of it will be exceeding great. It tends to refresh the Mind in the midst of other Work; to continue and exalt the Affections already kindled; and to raise them if they be flat and low. 'Tis a proper Way of giving Vent to pious Affections, and equally useful to compose and cheer, when under Dejection. 'Tis an excellent Means of Intercourse with God; and, in a Word, a good Preparation for the higher State of Religion above, in which Gratulation and Praise is a main Ingredient: But I leave these Hints with the Reader without farther arguing. His Practice will be the best Application and Improvement of them.

Jam. v. 13.

What Place and Order Psalmody should have in secret Devotion, I shall not take upon me to determine. Every one here may judge and chuse as he finds most expedient. You may begin with singing, or end with it; use it before or after reading or Examination, &c. varying the Order as you find best.

And thus I have gone thro' the several Parts of Closet Devotion, and have given an Account of the Exercises in which we should be employ'd in our Oratory, viz. reading the holy Scripture, Meditation, Examination, Prayer, and Psalmody. It will be thought, it may be, I have been too long upon some Heads, and too short upon others; but as this is not the only, nor greatest Fault in the Performance, I must leave all to the Reader's Candour.

C H A P.



### C H A P. III.

*Of the Time of Retirement. Whether there be any special Hours of Devotion that may be reckon'd Sacred; or Canonical Hours: How often we are to pray, &c. Whether we are obliged to go thro' all the Work that has been mentioned, every Time we retire.*

III.



Proceed to consider the Times of Retirement, or Seasons of Closet Devotion, when we are to enter into our Oratory and converse with God in the Manner prescribed.

Concerning which I shall remark the following Particulars.

1<sup>st</sup>, I don't apprehend there are any Hours appointed by God for Devotions, and that are *divinely canonical*; no precise Hour, or Hours in the Day set apart by God for this Service; so that 'tis expected from us we should retire at that Time rather than any other; much less any sacred Hours, when our Devotion will be more acceptable than at another Time. The *Jews*, 'tis granted, had their Hours of Prayer. Three of these we find mentioned in Scripture. One at the

the third Hour, or nine a-Clock; another at the sixth Hour, or twelve a-Clock. *Peter*, a Jewish Convert, who had been used to their Times of Devotion, retired to his Oratory at that Hour.

*Acts x. 9.* He went up to the House-top to pray about the sixth Hour. Another Hour of Prayer was the Time of their Evening Sacrifice, about three a-Clock in the Afternoon. *Peter and John went up to the Temple to pray about the Hour of Prayer,*

*Acts iii. 1.* being the ninth Hour. *David* seems to refer to these Hours of Devotion in his Practice, *Evening, Morning, and at Noon will I pray.* As also

*Psal. iv. 17.* *Daniel*, Chap. vi. 10. "The ancient Custom, "saith *Drusus*, was to pray thrice a Day; at "the third, sixth, and ninth Hour. The third "answers our nine in the Morning; the sixth "our twelve at Noon; and the ninth our three "in the Afternoon." Whence *Tertullian* † having premis'd that there is no Time limited, but that *Christians* are at Liberty to pray every where, and at all Times, adds, "Yet these "Hours, as they were the most remarkable "in human Affairs, dividing the Day, distinguishing Business, and made known by publick Sound, so they were the more solemn for "Devotion."

† Lib. de  
Jejun.  
cap. 10.

What the Original Antiquity, and Reason of these Hours were, are Questions not now to be discuss'd. The *Jews* pretended to derive them from the Patriarchs. The third Hour, saith *R. Menachem*, was set apart by *Abraham*, the sixth by *Isaac*, and the ninth by *Jacob*, which I suppose, stands upon the same Evidence with many others of their Traditions, (*viz.*) their own Imagination. Nor is it certain what gave Rise to that Practice. 'Tis probable, two of these Prayer-Seasons were chose as being the Hours of sacrificing.

ficing. The *Jews* used to pray towards *Jerusalem* wherever they were, so *Daniel*, Chap. vi. 10. <sup>Kings viii. 29, 38, 48.</sup> And as they prayed towards the solemn Place of Worship to note, it may be, among other Things, their Acknowledgment of, and Communion with the God that was there worshipped, and with his worshippers; so they would pray at the Time when a very solemn Part of the daily stated Worship, the Morning and Evening Sacrifice, was perform'd; looking upon these as the *mollia Tempora fandi*, the more auspicious favourable Seasons of addressing Heaven.

The like Practice was afterwards taken up in the *Christian* Church, from an Humour that pretty early prevail'd, of modelling their Worship according to the Manner of the *Jewish* Church. We have frequent mention among the primitive Writers of the Hours of Prayer, which at length were multiply'd and diversify'd according as their Inclinations led them; some making six, others seven of these canonical Hours; which are not only accounted sacred by the *Romanists*, but have been had in Veneration by some *Protestants*, who have wrote Books to accommodate the Devotion of them. The more common Distribution and Order of them is this \*, (1) The Mattins, or Morning

---

\* They that would see a particular Account of the canonical Hours, may consult *Johnson's* Collection of Ecclesiastical Laws, &c. Part 1. the Exceptions of *Ecghbright*, 23. where the seven Synaxes are reckon'd up. " The first is the nocturnal Synaxis; the second is at the first Hour of the Day; " the third is at what we call the third Hour; the fourth " at the sixth; the fifth, at the ninth; the sixth Synaxis is " in the Evening; the seventh we call *compline*. These seven Synaxes we ought daily to offer to God with great " Concern



Morning Prayer. (2) The Prayer of the third Hour, or nine a-Clock. (3) The sixth Hour, or twelve a-Clock. (4) The ninth Hour, or three a-Clock. (5) The Vespers, or Evening Prayer. (6) The *Compliment*, or finishing Prayer, to be said just before going to Bed. So that they had six canonical Hours, or five and a concluding Collect; though indeed it was pretty usual to make them seven.

I need not stand to argue with impartial Men, that all this is an arbitrary Service, and can plead no higher Authority than what we call Ecclesiastical; nor can I look upon it any thing else than one of the common Shifts to keep up something of the Form of Devotion, when the Spirit of it was very much lost out of the Church. If it be said, the *Jews* had their stated canonical Hours; I answer, they us'd to pray while their Sacrifices were offer'd. The People that attended the Temple Worship, pray'd without at that Time, and they might think it of Advantage to pray at the same Time elsewhere; which probably might be one Reason of observing those Hours. Nor is it any Wonder that such Converts as immediately pass'd out of the *Jewish* into the *Christian* Church, should retain the Custom they had been us'd to, as *Peter* and *John*, at least for a time; but that such Restrictions were to continue under

Luk. i. 10.

---

“ Concern for our selves, and for all Christian People (as the Psalmist testifies, when he saith, *Seven Times a Day will I praise thee, because of thy righteous Judgments*) and not to omit Masses, &c.” The Translator observes these Hours were gradually introduc'd; that *Cl. Al.* mentions only the third, sixth, and ninth Hours; that the Compline was not added till long after. Consult also the Appendix to Dr Hickes's Letters.

that

that Gospel we have no Intimation. Dr. *Whitby's* Remark \* is not impertinent here. " As their \* On *AA* iii. 1.  
 " (*Peter* and *John*) going to the Temple, is no  
 " Precedent for us *Christians* to perform our pri-  
 " vate Devotions in the Church, which by our  
 " Lord's Directions, we rather are to do *entring*  
 " *into our Closets*; God not being so present in  
 " our Churches, as in a Place of his perpetual  
 " and glorious Residence, as he was in the Ta-  
 " bernacle and Temple; so neither is their Ob-  
 " servation of these Hours of Prayer, any War-  
 " rant for our Institution of canonical Hours of  
 " Prayer, much less an Evidence that the Apo-  
 " stles, by going thither, did institute these ca-  
 " nonical Hours, as *Baronius* fancies.

The Reasons some give for these canonical Hours, and particularly for the Number Seven, which many have a very great Fondness for, are peculiar; and tho' not very edifying, nor, some may think, very suitable to my Discourse, yet as they here fall directly in my way, I shall insert them, and that from a *Protestant* Minister, where they stand without any Censure, Dr. *Hickes* † Appendix to his Letters.  
 I mean †. " Concerning the Number of the  
 " canonical Hours, saith he, the several Au-  
 " thors differ who write about them. Some fix  
 " upon the Number three, dividing the Night  
 " and the Day, each of them into four distinct  
 " Offices; but the Generality of the Fathers ra-  
 " ther chuse the Number *Seven*, grounding their  
 " Choice upon the Words of holy *David*, *Seven* *Psal. cxix.*  
 " *Times a Day do I praise thee because of thy righ-* 164-  
 " *teous Judgments.* And that Authority of *David*,  
 " who being a King, and much of his Time  
 " taken up in the regal Administration, and  
 " yet reserved so great a Part of it for the Ser-  
 " vice of God, is not the only Thing urged to  
 " give

- “ give Countenance to this Number ; but there  
 “ are likewise several other Reasons alledged  
*Iſa.* xi. “ from Scripture, as that of the Prophet *Iſaiab*,  
 “ wherein are pointed out the seven Gifts of  
 “ the Holy Ghost. (1.) The Spirit of Wiſdom.  
 “ (2.) And Underſtanding. (3.) The Spirit of  
 “ Counſel. (4.) And ghottly Strength. (5.)  
 “ The Spirit of Knowledge. (6.) And Piety.  
 “ (7.) The Spirit of an holy and godly Fear.  
 “ And our old Adverſary takes unto him seven  
*Mat.* xii. “ other Spirits wickeder than himſelf, againſt  
 45. “ whom we ſhall not be able to prevail with-  
*Luke* xi. “ out the *ſevenfold* Grace of the Holy Spirit.  
 26. “ Therefore in order to obtain this *ſevenfold*  
 “ Grace, the Church has appointed that Men  
 “ ſhould offer up a *ſevenfold* Sacrifice of Praise to  
*Pro.* xxiv. “ God. Farthermore, ’tis ſaid, *A juſt Man falleth*  
 16. “ *ſeven Times a Day, and riſeth again.* There  
 — xxvii. “ are likewise *ſeven* deadly Sins and Abomina-  
 25. “ tions, wherefore if any one would not fall  
 “ into them, or having fallen into them would  
 “ recover himſelf, he muſt praise God, and  
 “ beg Pardon *ſeven* Times. Our Saviour has  
 “ comprehended the Lord’s Prayer in ſeven  
 “ Petitions, and God Almighty finiſhed his  
 “ Works which he created in ſeven Days.  
 “ Theſe *ſeven* Hours are alſo ſaid to be repre-  
 “ ſented by the ſeven Trumpets, at the Sound  
*Joſb.* vi. “ whereof the Walls of *Jericho* fell down, and  
*Lev.* xiv. “ by the *ſeven* Aſperſions or Sprinklings. To  
 51. “ theſe we may add the ſeven Stars, ſeven  
*Rev.* i. “ Churches, and ſeven Golden Candleſticks.  
 “ And in this Point we may receive farther  
 “ Information from ſeveral of the Fathers:  
 “ As *St. Baſil, Gregory Nazianzen, St. Auſtin,*  
 “ *St. Hierom, &c.*” The Reader will excuſe,  
 I hope, this Ramble. I can’t but wonder, I  
 confeſs,

confess, so learned a Man should produce such Reasons to support a Practice he is zealous for, when indeed they only serve to disgrace it. What I am saying is, that under the Gospel there are no particular Hours every Day, sacred to Devotions; no precise Hours in which we are obliged to attend the Duties of the Oratory: God has not obliged us to any, and Men have no Authority to do it. Here every *Christian* is to be left to his own Liberty and Choice.

2<sup>dly</sup>, As God has not appointed the precise Hours and Time of Devotion every Day, so neither has he told us *how often* in the Day we should retire for Devotion. *When thou prayest*, saith Christ, *enter into thy Closet*, &c. He doth not say *how often* we must pray, only requires that *whenever* we pray, we proceed in that Manner. Indeed as to the Time, Length, and other Circumstances of Devotion, a great deal is left under the Gospel, to Christian Prudence and Zeal. As in the Free-will Offerings under the Law, the Manner of them was regulated, but the Number of them was not determined; so 'tis with Respect to the Frequency of our Devotions; 'tis expected and required that we pray; and 'tis appointed how we must pray; but *when* and *how often* is not prescribed. Here our Necessities, Occasions, Love and Zeal must give Laws to us. And yet,

3<sup>dly</sup>, I think the Scripture sufficiently intimates, that we should be *frequent* in Devotion, particularly in Prayer. This is the least that can be intended by those Texts, wherein we are exhorted to *pray without ceasing*. To *pray always with all Prayer and Supplication*. *Always pray, and not faint*. *Watch unto Prayer*. The Meaning is not that Prayer should ingross all our Religion, much less all our Time, and by our whole Employment,

1 Thes. v.

17.

Ephes. vi.

18.

Luke

xviii. 1.

1 Pet. iv.

7.

T t



ployment, as is said to have been the Dream of some in the Primitive Church; but surely they must import *Frequency*. He that *seldom* prays, seldom in his Life, seldom in the Week, I may add, seldom in the Day, can't be thought to fulfil these Precepts. How often *precisely* we are to be in our Oratory engag'd in Devotion, we are not told: But so much is certain, that if we regard either our Interests and Occasions, or our Rule, it must be often.

4<sup>thly</sup>, The Scripture not only directs in general to pray *often*, but to pray *daily*. This may very clearly be collected from the Lord's Prayer, which I take to be a Plan of Prayer, design'd to instruct us in the Matter, Method, and Order of our Desires and Petitions: and among other Admonitions it affords us touching the Discharge of this important Duty, one is, that we are *every Day* to be employ'd in it; for thus it runs, — Give us *this Day* our daily Bread; give us *Day by Day* our daily Bread, and forgive us our Trespases, &c. We daily depend on God for outward Subsistence and Supplies, and equally for daily Pardon, Support and Defence against our spiritual Enemies; which we are here taught *every Day*, to address our Father in Heaven for. So that he who doth not pray at least *daily*, doth not act as a Disciple of Christ, nor can he justly call him Master.

5<sup>thly</sup>, We may farther conclude from Scripture Hints, that we ought to pray not only *daily*, but *twice every Day*. This some have thought to be the precise Meaning of the Phrase, *Pray*  
 1 Thes. v. *without ceasing*; referring to the daily Sacrifice  
 17. under the Law, which was offer'd Day by Day continually, in the Morning and in the Evening of each Day. “ This was called the conti-  
 — nual

“ nual Sacrifice, saith a learned Man, and ac-  
 “ cordingly is rendered by the *Septuagint* ἡ θυσία Dan. viii. 11.  
 “ θυσίας. Thus the Mincha † which the High ibid.  
 “ Priest offered every Day; part of it in the † Whit. in  
 “ Morning, and part of it in the Evening, is loc.  
 “ stiled by them ἡ θυσία θυσίας. The Burnt- Lev. vi. 20.  
 “ Offering which was offer'd without Intermis-  
 “ sion twice a Day, is in the *Hebrew* עֲלֵה תמיד  
 “ the continual or never-ceasing Sacrifice.” So Numb. xxviii. 24, 31.  
 that the Scripture requiring us to pray *without*  
*ceasing*, and *always*, must be understood to in-  
 tend, according to the known Sense of the Phrase,  
 our praying constantly every Day, and twice  
 every Day. We are to have our Morning and  
 Evening Sacrifice, and this continually. We  
 should not make nor suffer the daily Sacrifice to  
 cease. And methinks, there is something of a  
 natural Fitness in it, that we should thus begin  
 and close the Day with God; and so often at  
 least every Day, retire into our Oratory. How  
 reasonable is it, that in the Morning we should  
 look up to, and adore the Hand that has pro-  
 tected us through the Night, committing our-  
 selves to the Conduct thereof in the Day? And  
 'tis equally reasonable we should do the same at  
 Night, renew the Day, own the divine Provi-  
 dence in it, and make Acknowledgments an-  
 swerable to our Occasion. 'Tis a good Thing;  
 it has a Decency, a natural Equity and Comli-  
 nence in it, to give Thanks unto the Lord, Psal. xcii. 1, 2.  
*to shew forth his Loving-kindness in the Morning, and his*  
*Faithfulness every Night.* 'Tis in every respect a  
 good Thing, acceptable to God, suitable to our  
 Circumstances, and profitable for us, and there-  
 fore should not be neglected by us.

6<sup>thly</sup>, I might observe that the Examples of  
 good Men, recorded in Scripture, seem to car-

Psal. lv.

17.

Dan. vi.

10.

ry the Matter higher, and recommend *three Times* as proper to be observ'd in the Course of daily Devotion. Thus *David*; *Evening, Morning, and at Noon, will I pray.* And we read of *Daniel*, that *he kneeled upon his Knees three Times a Day, and prayed, and gave Thanks before God*; which, it seems, was his Custom and Practice; for 'tis added, *as he did aforetime.* And no Question the Christian may find his Account in the like Zeal; a short Retirement at Noon, when Circumstances will admit of it, may be a Repast in the Midst of the Hurries, Business and Company of the Day; help to revive good Impressions made by the Morning Devotion; recover the Mind out of the World; give it a Bias and Turn towards divine Objects, and so dispose it not only for the remaining Duties of the Day, but for more solemn Converse with God at Night. Thus the Fire of the Altar may be kept in always.

7<sup>thly</sup>, I would farther suggest, that as God has not appropriated any particular Hours to Devotion, the Time thereof is left to every one's Discretion: (*i. e.*) upon a due Consideration of our Circumstances, we are to chuse that Hour at Night and Morning we judge most convenient. At Morning, I reckon it may ordinarily be best to prepare for Devotion immediately after we rise, and not suffer any other Business to intervene. At Night we may be more at Liberty, and should fix upon that Hour which upon Experience we find most proper. And it may be best, for some at least, to keep to their Hour as far as they can, and not be diverted by frivolous Excuses; though I don't think we should be very resolute in this Matter, much less bind ourselves by solemn Promises or Vows; as, that we

will spend every Night such an Hour, between seven and eight, or between eight and nine, in Devotion; this may prove a Snare to us: Several things may fall out; unavoidable Business, Company, or Indisposition, to render such a Purpose impracticable; and therefore 'tis fit to be left more at Liberty, and reserve Room for Incidents and unforeseen Impediments, still guarding against Slothfulness, and all unnecessary Avocations. It may be well to fix the Time with the Latitude mentioned, and keep as close and steady to it as we can. This will be, as the *Jews* used to say of some of their own Canons, *Septimentum Legis*, a prudent Provision against the Neglect of that Duty.

I'll only add, 8<sup>thly</sup>, Besides the stated ordinary Times of Retirement, there are special Occasions and Times of *more solemn Devotion*. When Christ was commissioning his Disciples to the high and difficult Office they were to be employ'd in, he spent a whole Night in the *προσκύβω*, or Oratory. The Christian will have many of these extraordinary Occasions in the Course of his Life; nor will he neglect them if he be duly attentive. A Time of great Trial and Exercise is a Time of special Devotion. Prayer then is eminently James v. 13. seasonable and useful; as a Means of expressing our Dependance on God, Subjection and Resignation to him; as it tends to compose and calm the Mind, and derive Supports and Supplies from above, &c. Accordingly it has been the Practice of good Men at such a Time; severe Temptations and Trials have summon'd them into their Oratories, and brought them to their Knees, Psal. cix. 2, 3, 4. 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8. A Time of prevailing Corruption, great Disorder of Heart and Frame, of Backsliding and Apostacy, loss of Strength, Light and Comfort,



is also a proper Season of extraordinary Prayer. So when we have Matters depending of extraordinary Importance to ourselves, to others, or to both, we are then called to more than common Devotions; to enter into our Oratory, and continue in it, as Christ did, all Night, or all Day; bespeaking with the utmost Importunity his Presence and Conduct, and committing our Affairs to him. But as this doth not fall within the Compass of my present Subject, but properly belongs to the extraordinary Work of Retirement, I shall not farther enlarge upon it, but conclude this Head with an Enquiry, which some may take Occasion to make from what has been said, *viz.*

Is it necessary to go through all the Work that has been prescrib'd, every Time we retire? as rendring the Scripture, and that with such Reflections as were mentioned, Meditation, Self-Examination, Prayer, and Psalmody? Can it be expected from the main Body of Christians, that they should have Time and Capacity for so much, and such Manner of Work in their constant Closet Devotion? I answer, what has been recommended is design'd as a Scheme and Plan of the more perfect Manner of Closet Devotion; not expecting that every Christian at all Times should attend the whole of it. But to answer more distinctly.

I do suppose there may be some serious Christians that are not qualified to perform all this Service with any great Profit and Advantage *at any Time*; which is the Case of Persons of no Education, and very mean Parts. They can make little or nothing of Meditation, and expounding Scripture to themselves, &c. should they attempt it: And there needs no other Argument to prove they  
are

are not oblig'd to it. We don't serve an hard Master, gathering where he has not strewed: As, *where much is given, much shall be required*; so con- Luke xii. frequently, where little is given, little shall be re- 48. quired. The Conclusion from Inability to Non-Obligation is undeniable, supposing the Inability be not voluntary and acquir'd, owing to Sloth, Negligence, Disaffection, &c. Not but the serious Christians of ordinary Parts may perform a great Part of what has been prescrib'd. A willing Mind, and a warm Heart, will supply many Defects of the Head. We should not hastily conclude ourselves unable when we are not; Time and Practice may remove the Difficulties we think insuperable: Tho' after all, some are so far unqualify'd for part of these Exercises, that I don't think them call'd to them. And I am willing to own, they are not the Persons for whose Service this Book is intended.

As there are some that can *never* go through all this Work in their Oratories, so there are others that can *seldom* do it: The one want Capacity, the other want Time; which latter is the Case of many Servants, tho' not of all. Some have Time enough to command; their Business allows them vacant Hours; or they might redeem an Hour from their Beds without Prejudice to their Health. They serve Masters that would not grudge them a little Time for Religion, were they disposed to make good Use of it. But others are more straitned; their Business and severe Masters † † Who challenge almost the whole of the Time they can seem to spare out of their Beds; and it can't be expected look upon from these that they should daily, or often, per- Servants form all the Duties of the Oratory that have been only as another Species of mention'd. Working Cattle.

I add, None are *always* in such Circumstances as will allow them to go thorough the whole pre-scrib'd. They may want Time, labour under Indisposition either of Body or Mind, or both. As when upon a Journey, when fatigu'd by Company, Business, &c. which may happen to the most Watchful and Devout. And when this is the Case, I don't apprehend it their Duty to attempt any more solemn Devotion, as Meditation, Examination, &c. What lies before them at such a Time, is to commit themselves to God in a serious and short Prayer (at Night we'll suppose before they go to Bed), and wait a more favourable Opportunity for the rest. Negative Precepts, as the Schools speak, bind *ad semper*; when we are commanded not to steal, not to kill or lye, there is no Part of Time wherein these Precepts don't oblige. But positive Precepts are of a different Nature: When we are bid to pray, meditate, commune with our Hearts, &c. the Meaning is not, that we are to be *always* employ'd in such Duties, but at the proper Times and Seasons thereof.

But tho' there are some that can *never* go thro' all this *Work*, others that can *seldom*, and none that can *always* do it; yet I doubt not there are great Numbers of Christians that may *often* attend the whole of it ordinarily *once every Day*, if it be not their own Fault. One Hour might suffice for all the Purposes of Devotions, according to the Plan proposed: and certainly they must be able to give a better Account of their Time, than I am afraid most can, that may justly plead they can't spare so much from more necessary important Business, for the Duties of the Closet. I before mentioned the Practice of a good Man, that used to divide the twenty four Hours of each Day into three Parts, allowing eight Hours for Refreshment;

ment ; Eating, Sleep, &c. eight Hours for the Business of his peculiar Calling, and eight Hours for Devotion. If this be more than the Leisure of some will permit, and what the Zeal of few will rise up to, yet methinks one Hour in twenty four is but a small Proportion of our Time. 'Tis past Question, most of us might spare so much Time *ordinarily every Day*, for the Oratory, without intrenching upon any necessary Business: Nor shall we be found acting a reasonable Part, such as will stand the Examination of our own Consciences, to say nothing of the Tribunal of God, if we refuse it. What! have we 24 Hours every Day to spend and to account for? And shall we not redeem one of them for the Oratory! not one serious Hour in 24! If two Hours were spent in the Closet, there is 22 for the rest; and shall we grudge so small a Portion of our Time for such Work? Work so important, so profitable, so necessary!

But after all, that I may accommodate the Discourse as much as possible, to the Occasions, and even Infirmities of Men, I would come lower; if it should be thought, that the daily Course and Observation of all these Duties would exceed, either the Leisure or Zeal of the most, I propose it may be attended *sometimes*. For Instance, *twice a Week*; on *Wednesday* or *Thursday* Night, and on *Lord's-Day* Night; oftener it may be done by the Generality of Christians; it would be well to resolve that *so often, at least*, it shall be attended by all of us. The Lord's-Day is sacred Time, set apart for the Work of our Souls and another World; when we shall dismiss the World, and, *vacare Deo*, essay the Life of Heaven. The very Heathens thought the Design of their Festivals was τὸν νῦν ἀπείγην ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀσχολημάτων, to withdraw the Mind from secular and human



human Business, that it might be turned *negs to Servs*, to Subjects divine and spiritual; the solemn Pause of a Sabbath, or Day of holy Rest, should be thus improved, and consequently will not only admit of, and take in such Works as I have been describing, but seems to require it: We should every Lord's-Day spend a considerable Time in our Oratories, reading, examining, meditating, &c. an Hour or two may be well employ'd in such Exercises, and may be reckon'd due to them. I also propose that some Time be set apart for the same Work, on another Evening in the Week; suppose *Wednesday*, or *Thursday*. Many may be more frequent, that none should be less frequent, is what I am now insisting upon.

It can't, with any Modesty, be pretended, that this would draw too great a Burden upon us. Methinks there is something so shocking in such an Objection, that no Christian should know how to come into it. Two Hours, twice a Week, too much for solemn Devotion! for Converse with God, revising and settling the Affairs of our Souls! too much for Christians that believe Eternity, and profess to make Religion their Business! There are in a Week 168 Hours. The Thing now pleaded is that three or four of these be appropriated to the more solemn Duties of the Closet. And shall this be esteem'd too much? too much Time, too much Labour! What wretched Stupidity and Unthoughtfulness; how little Value for our Souls and another World, must such a Pretence imply? Was the Thing required of us, to roll a Stone up an Hill, to serve as Slaves in a Galley, or dig in a Mine Months, or Years; there might be something in the Aversion: But 'tis to converse with Heaven, improve our Minds and refresh ourselves in the divine Presence, &c. And shall

shall two or three Hours in 168 be thought too great a Proportion of our Time to be thus employ'd!

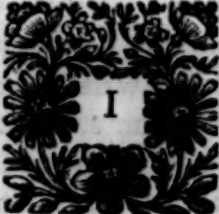
Let us briefly view the Work in the whole Compass of it, and see what there is in it that is burdensome, and discouraging. In the Morning, after a few serious Thoughts and Ejaculations, when rising, dressing, &c. a Chapter is read, and then follows Prayer, in which some will continue a quarter of an Hour; some half an Hour, others more (I say nothing of the Devotion at Noon, or any occasional Devotion in the Day; and of pious Ejaculations which may attend any Business, Company or Place). At Night some Review is ordinarily made of the Day, in the Manner before explain'd. Then a Chapter is read, with such Remarks as more easily occur to the Worshipper; and the whole closed with Prayer. This is the most stated, ordinary Course of the Christian's Devotion, with such Variations, as accidental Circumstances call for. Twice a Week, on the Lord's-Day Night, and some other Night, an Hour or two is appointed for the Service of the Oratory; in which a Chapter is read, with Reflections, as before directed: Or a Meditation attempted on a particular Subject; it may be upon a Sermon that Day, or lately, heard. Then an Examination is made of Heart, Conduct, Frame, &c. for that Day, or some Days past. Then a Psalm or Hymn is sung, and solemn Prayer concludes the Exercise. I don't pretend to prescribe the precise Order of these Duties, any more than the Length of them. I only mention how they *may* be, not saying how they *must*. And what is there in all this, to be thought tedious and burdensome? It requires no great Time; an Hour or two at the most will be enough

enough to dispatch the whole of it. One Hour in the daily ordinary Devotion, two Hours twice a Week for the more solemn Devotion, and the several particular Exercises prescrib'd, will answer all I am pleading for: That is nine Hours in the Week. *Nine Hours out of 168!* I am forced to be thus particular, not only to explain, but to apologize for a Method of Devotion that may seem a little out of the Way; and that not only the profane and atheistical will contemn, but the Lovers of Ease and Pleasure, that are more accusom'd to Clubs than Devotion, may boggle at. This, Christian, is the Service I would engage thee in. If thou canst say, truly say, and wilt maintain it; that thou hast not Time for it, canst not spare so many Hours in the Week from higher and greater Things; that thou bestowest thy Time every Evening in better, and more necessary Employment; that the Work prescrib'd will not quit the Cost, is not of so great Moment as to deserve so much Care and Self-Denial, *thou may'st neglect it*; if not, it demands thy Attention; and so I leave it to thy Conscience and the Teaching of Heaven, without farther Expostulation.



## CHAP. IV.

*Containing several Propositions, evidencing our Obligations to worship God in Retirement.*

IV.  Have already in some Measure discharg'd this Part of my Undertaking, under each of the Heads which have been insisted upon; as reading the Scripture, Meditation, Examination, &c. And therefore shall here only consider the Duty *in general*, worshipping God in our Oratories, or Closets; and offer some Arguments to prove an Obligation upon us to do this; *to retire and converse with God in secret*. The Subject is somewhat nice and abstruse, and would lead to a greater Compass of Speculation, was it to be fully consider'd, than may at present be allow'd, having so much exceeded in some former Branches of my Discourse. I shall reduce what I think proper to say within a little Room, and under the following Propositions.

1<sup>st</sup>, Something of Religion seems essential to the human Species, and inseparable from the Nature of Man. Man is *Animale Religiosum*; thus some have defin'd him. *A Creature capable of Religion*; making Religion, rather than bare Reason,



• Bishop  
Wilkins of  
Nat. Reli-  
gion, p.  
288.

son, his essential Difference and Distinction from the lower Creatures. “ The Essence of Man (to express myself in the Words of a good \* Divine) “ may be said to consist in Religion. There “ are, discernable in the Actions of many brute “ Creatures, some Footsteps, some imperfect Strictures and Degrees of Ratiocination; such a “ natural Sagacity, as at least bears a near Resemblance to Reason: from whence it may “ follow, that it is not Reason in general which “ is the Form of human Nature; but Reason as “ it is determin’d to Actions of Religion, of “ which we do not find the least Signs or Degrees “ in Brutes: Man being the only Creature in this “ this visible World, that is formed with a Capacity of worshipping and enjoying his Maker. “ nor is this any new Opinion, but what several “ of the ancient Writers, Philosophers, Orators “ and Poets have attested to; who make the Notion of a Deity, and Adoration of him, to be “ the true Difference between Man and Beast. So “ † Tully; *Ex tot generibus nullum est animal præter hominem*, &c. Among all the living Creatures “ there are in the World, there is none but Man “ that hath any Notion of a Deity; and among “ Mankind there is no Nation so wild and barbarous, but pretends to some Religion; whence it “ should seem this is the most proper Difference “ between Man and Beasts. And in another Place, “ he makes this to be the Character of that Reason, which is the Form of Man, that it is *vinculum Dei & hominis*, which imports both Name “ and Thing. “ Of the same Sense is that of the Satyrist, “ who speaking of Religion, and a Sense of divine Things, saith this of it.

† De Leg.  
lib. 1.

— “ Separat

— “ *Separat hoc nos*  
 “ *A grege mutorum, atque ideo venerabile soli*  
 “ *Sortiti ingenium divinorumque capaces.*

“ ’Tis this, saith he, which doth distinguish us  
 “ from brute Creatures, that we have Souls capa-  
 “ ble of divine Impressions. There are abundance  
 “ of Expressions to this Purpose in several other of  
 “ the Heathen Writers. That of \* *Plutarch* where \* De fu-  
 “ he styles Irreligion a kind of *Stupor*, whereby perfitio-  
 “ Men are, as it were, deprived of their Senses. ne.  
 “ And in another Place, he asserts it to be an ex-  
 “ ceeding improper Thing, to ascribe true Reason  
 “ to those who do not acknowledge and adore the  
 “ Deity. So again, † *Tully, quis hunc hominem dixit* † Nat. De-  
 “ rit, &c. Why should any one style such an one or.  
 “ a Man, who by what he sees in the World, is  
 “ not convinced of a Deity, and of a Providence,  
 “ and of the Adoration due to a Deity. *Non modo*  
 “ *non philosophos, sed nec homines quidem fuisse dixi-*  
 “ *rim* (saith another ||) Men that are destitute of || Laetan-  
 “ Religion, are so far from being learned Philo- tius.  
 “ sophers, that they ought not to be esteem’d so  
 “ much as reasonable Men.

I know ’tis common for those that discard Re-  
 ligion, and set it at Defiance, to pride themselves  
 in their Wit, and boast of their Reason; but their  
 Boasts are vain. They are so far from being the  
 only, or great Men of Reason, as they would be  
 thought, that in Reality, whilst they want Reli-  
 gion, they forfeit all Pretence to Reason. They  
 have a sort of Reason, ’tis granted, and so have  
 the Brutes. A Spaniel, Monkey, and Baboon  
 can do Feats; can sport and play, eat, drink, and  
 propagate their Kind: And though the Reason of  
 these Men reaches farther, and rises somewhat high-  
 er;

\* *Sancti-  
us's Ani-  
mal, &c.*

er; yet, whilst it doth not lead them to God, but stops short of Religion, it can't be call'd the divine Reason, which is the Distinction of a superior Species and Order \* of Creatures; Nor can I see but the Soul of some of the more sagacious Brutes, in a Body organized, as the human Body is, might serve most of the Purposes the Persons I am speaking of, live for. In short, Reason, as 'tis the Characteristick of Man, is in Conjunction with Religion; 'tis a Ray of Divinity and will direct the Mind upwards, and tend to its Original, if it be not suppress'd or extinguish'd. And where 'tis without this Tendency, and destitute of Religion, it must be look'd upon as having degenerated into sensual and brutish; leaving the Possessor in the Classis of the Brutes; for tho' he retain the Name, the erect Figure and outward Shape of Man, he has put off the Nature, and wants the inward Principle and Form of Man.

2<sup>dly</sup>, As Religion is essential to Man, acting as such, and according to the Constitution and Frame of his Nature, so divine Worship is essential to Religion, and consequently essential to Man as a religious Creature. Every reasonable Creature is bound to worship, esteem, love, serve, and adore the supreme Being. The Obligation to this might be demonstrated. There is a Sort of Honour and Respect due to every Being, according to the Measure of Excellency it is possess'd of. Where there is great Power, with great Wisdom and Goodness, and these display'd in numerous, constant Instances, a proportionable Deference and Worship becomes due. We owe Love and Honour to a wise and good Man, one of eminent Accomplishments and Character; more to an Angel; and still more and more, as any Being is distinguished and advanced in the Scale of Perfection. Now as God has  
all



all possible Perfections, all Excellencies, and in the highest Degree, Worship, divine supreme Worship (which properly lies in agnizing, and acknowledging these Perfections with suitable Devotion) is due to him, from every Being capable of discerning them, and to whom they are made known.

And this is the more due, and the Obligation to it confirm'd, when that Being is God's Creature; deriving all it's Power and Capacities from him, and subsisting by his Care; which is the Case of Man. *In him we live, and move, and are.* Our Beings are from him; he furnish'd us with our Faculties; he sustains us every Moment, and by his Visitation upholds our Spirit. He supplies all our Wants, bestows all our Comforts, and performs all Things for us. In short, he's not only the greatest and best of Beings, but our Maker, Preserver, and constant Benefactor, from whence results an undeniable Obligation to acknowledge and worship him. *Let us worship and bow down,* Psal. xcvi. *saith the Psalmist, let us kneel before the Lord our* 6.

*Maker.* So Psal. c. *He hath made us;* it follows, *Enter into his Gates with Thanksgiving, and into his Courts with Praise, be thankful unto him, and bless his Name,* ver. 3, 4. As he has made us, he has an undoubted Right to our Homage and Worship. Accordingly, we find he challenges it, upon Principles of common Equity, and such as are allowed universally, among Mankind, in the Relations they stand in one to another. *A Son honoureth* Mal. i. 6. *his Father, and a Servant his Master: If then I be a Father, where is my Honour? and if I be a Master, where is my Fear?*

So that to worship God, to own his Providence, celebrate his Perfections, express our Dependence upon him, pray to him in our Wants, give him Praise for his Benefits, and pay him all suitable



Homage, is a necessary Duty arising out of the Nature of Things ; the Obligation to which can never cease, whilst Things continue as they are between God and Man : That is, while God continues what he is. A Being of absolute Perfection ; the Creator, sovereign Governour, and constant Benefactor of the World : And while Man continues what he is, God's Creature, deriving all from him, and always depending upon him. And hence it may be it is, that we have no more express Institution and Appointment of divine Worship in its several Kinds in Scripture. The Bible rather supposes than commands it ; refers to it as a known, confessed Thing ; known, *à priori*, antecedently to supernatural Revelation, as being Part of νόμος ἑμψυχός, the internal Law, written in the Heart, and legible to all. In short, to worship God is the Duty of every reasonable Creature, natural, necessary, and unchangeable, and known by the Light of Reason.

3<sup>dly</sup>, Not only Worship, in general, but *secret* Worship may be consider'd as a necessary Duty of every reasonable Creature ; the Obligation to which may also be evinc'd from the Light of Nature, and Principles of Reason. It not only has peculiar Advantages, as it affords greater Liberty for particular Persons to transact with God their particular, special Affairs ; to lay before him their personal Grievances, Complaints and Wants, and insist on Cases proper to themselves, after another Manner than can be done in social Worship, which is a Circumstance that doth not a little recommend it ; but it also tends to the Honour of God in a special Manner ; it gives him the Glory of some of his Attributes, of his Omnipresence and Omniscience, for Instance, more than publick Worship doth : Hereby we acknowledge that *he sees in secret* :

*secret*: Hereby also we own his Providence, not only in general, but in particular; that he takes Care of Individuals, interests himself in our Matters, and declares our Dependence upon him, and Obligations to him in particular. In social, publick Worship, we celebrate him as a *common* Benefactor; in secret Worship, we own special Obligations. Not to say that secret Worship carries in it, at least, a greater Appearance of Sincerity, than social. A Person may join in publick Assemblies upon Motives that have nothing of God and Religion in them; but when he addresses himself to God in Retirement, there is less Temptation to act a Part, and play the Hypocrite: The Business is now off the Theatre, and carried on in a Manner that implies, one would think, (tho' 'tis granted Hypocrisy may creep in here) a real Conviction of the divine Presence, Providence and Government, and of the Worshipper's Dependence, &c. So that there seems to be something in the Circumstance of this sort of Worship as *secret*, that inforces the Obligation of it. Every one, as he has his private, particular Wants, Blessings, and various distinct Cases, ought to carry these before God, and worship in secret.

4<sup>thly</sup>, Though the Scripture, as I said, rather supposes secret Worship a Duty, than expressly institutes it, yet the Mention it makes of it, the Rules it lays down for the Discharge of it, not only imply, but confirm our Obligation to it. The Reader, that is acquainted with his Bible, and with the Subject, knows how much it insists on the Duties of Worship, Prayer, Praise, &c. It gives several Hints concerning the Frequency of these Duties, particularly of Prayer; as, that we *pray without ceasing. Pray always, with all Prayer and Supplication.* It recommends the Duty

1 Thess. v.  
17.  
Ephes. vi.  
in 18.

1 Tim. ii.

8.

Matth. vi.

6.

in general, that Men pray every where, lifting up holy Hands, without Wrath and Doubting. Christ requires of his Disciples, that they enter into their Closet, and pray to their Father in secret. It gives many Directions for the Management of Devotion. The Book of *Psalms* abounds with Precepts, Rules and Examples, relating to Prayer, Praise, and Meditation, and is indeed mostly a Collection of the Materials of secret Devotion. It intimates the Necessity of such Exercises, and makes the Neglect of them the Character of Hypocrites and the Ungodly, *Job* xv. 4. xxvii. 10. *Psal.* x. 4. xiv. 4. *Jer.* x. 25. In short, the Bible is full of the Subject (secret Devotion) of Precepts, Rules, Motives relating to it; so that if we regard either the Voice of Nature or Scripture, we must receive it as a Duty. He that has no Oratory, and is not a Man of Devotion, at once violates the Principles of his own Mind and Conscience, and despises the Authority of God in his Word.

5<sup>thly</sup>, So full is the Evidence of this Duty (of conversing with God in secret) and so general the Conviction of it, that it appears to have been the constant Practice of the Church of God, and of all the sincere, genuine Members of it, in every Age of the World. Indeed the History of the first Ages of the Church, for some thousand Years, is transmitted to us in such short Memoirs and general Hints, that no distinct Account of their private Devotion can be expected: But so much is said of them, as gives us reason to conclude, that all the Faithful, all good Men, were then, as ever since, Men of Devotion. Adam, no question, was often employ'd in conversing with God, during his Innocency, as may be probably inferr'd from what he saith, *I heard thy Voice in the Garden, and was afraid, and hid myself.* He had

Gen. iii.

10.



had been accustom'd to the Voice of God; having, 'tis likely, had frequent Intercourse with him. He had been us'd to hear from God (and, no doubt, speak to him) and therefore knew his Voice as soon as he heard it. Nor can we question but *Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noab*, and other pious Men of that Time, enjoy'd the like Privilege; especially when 'tis said of some of them, particularly of *Enoch* and *Noab*, *that they walked with God*; which certainly must imply *mutual Converse*; gracious Vouchsafements on God's Part, and much Devotion on theirs. *Abraham*, that is so much distinguish'd in the Annals of the Church, and represented as the Father of the Faithful, was a Person of Devotion. He maintain'd frequent Intercourse with Heaven, *Gen. Chap. xv. Chap. xvii.* In the third Verse we find him on his Face, and God talking with him. He intercedes for *Sodom*, *Chap. xviii. 23.* and for *Abimelech*, *Chap. xx. 17.* If it be objected these are rather Instances of occasional than constant Devotion: We read afterwards, that when he had got some little Settlement at *Beer-sheba*, he immediately prepared himself an Oratory for *stated Devotion*, as is probable. *Abraham planted a Grove in Beer-sheba, and there he called upon the Name of the Lord, the everlasting God.* It *Gen. xxi.* seems to have been a sort of a *Proseuche*, or Place 33. for retired Worship. There *Abraham called upon God*, and spent many Hours, no doubt, in solemn Devotion: And it would seem that several Members of his Family were train'd up to Devotion; something of this may be inferred from the Behaviour of his Servant *Eleazar*, upon a particular Occasion, *Gen. xxiv. 12, &c.* He addresses himself to God like one that was no Stranger to such Employment. So *Isaac*, *Gen. xxiv. 63.* 'Tis said he *went out to meditate* (or pray, and 'tis likely



to do both) *in the Field at the Even-tide*: He spent Part of his Evenings in Meditation and Prayer, which we may suppose was his common Practice. And now like a Man of Religion and Devotion was that we read of, *Gen. xxv. 21. Isaac intreated the Lord for his Wife, because she was barren; and the Lord was intreated of him.* The same Spirit of Devotion appears in *Jacob*; witness what passed at *Bethel, Gen. xxviii. 16.* to the End; at *Mabab-naim, Gen. xxxii. 9, — 13.* With how much Strength and Skill doth he plead with God? In 24 and 26th Verses, we find him alone wrestling with the Angel: 'Tis plain, how much soever the Body might be concern'd, the Mind was also in the Conflict; he wrestled for a Blessing, *ver. 26.* and how he wrestled the Prophet tells us, *he wept and made Supplication to him.* "The Patriarch, "saith Monsr. \* *Saurin*, after having taken the "Steps, Prudence suggested to him for his Safe-  
 "ry, was desirous to spend a few Moments in Re-  
 "tirement, perhaps to recollect his Thoughts,  
 "and betake himself once again to Prayer. In  
 "these holy Exercises God communicates him-  
 "self to the Soul after the most intimate Man-  
 "ner; and in such he gave the ancient Patri-  
 "archs the most sensible Marks of his Presence,  
 "and of his Love." It seems he did so to *Jacob* on this Occasion, in a very eminent Manner. Hence both the Suppliant and Place receive a new Name, not a little honourable. *Jacob* is called *Israel*, and *Jabbock* is called *PENIEL*, *i. e.* the Face of God; for, saith he, *I have seen God Face to Face, ver. 30.* Glorious was the Combat in which the poor weeping Suppliant becomes a Conqueror, and, as a Prince, has Power with God and prevails. No doubt the good Man would remember *Peniel* as long as he lived, and often  
 desire

Hof. xii.

4

\* Differ.

tat. on O.

T. p. 241.

desire to see the Face of God in the like Exercises. And what shall I more say? for the Time would fail me to tell of *Noah*, *Job*, *Daniel*, of *David*, of *Samuel* also, and of the Prophets: Some of these the Scripture distinguishes as Persons of more than ordinary Piety and Devotion; as *Noah*, *Daniel* and *Job*, Ezek. xiv. 14. *Moses* and *Samuel*, Jer. xv. 1. And tho' we have but a few Sketches, short Memoirs of their Religion, yet so much is said of them, as shews they were Persons of great Eminency, particularly for Devotion.

*Noah* has this Character, that *he walked with God*. *Daniel* was a special Favourite of God; had not only extraordinary Intimacy with God in Prayer, but signal Answers of Prayer; was admitted into the secret Counsel of Heaven, Dan. ii. 17, 18, 19. had an Angel sent him, to give him Assurance that his Prayer was accepted, and that he was a Person greatly beloved, Chap. ix. 20, 21, 22, 23. And besides his extraordinary Devotions, he had his stated Periods thereof *three Times a Day*; which he attended with a Resolution that no Dangers could divert him from. When he knew that the Decree was signed, *he went into his House, and his Windows being open towards Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his Knees three Times a Day, and prayed, and gave Thanks before his God, as he did aforetime*, Dan. vi.

No Terrors could make him omit his Devotion, 10. nor change the Course and Method of it. And one may infer *Job's* Eminency in this Duty, as from other Passages in his Book, so particularly from this, that God himself appoints and accepts him as an Advocate for his Friends. *My Wrath*, Job xlii, saith the Lord to *Eliphaz*, *is kindled against thee*, 7, 8. *and against thy two Friends; therefore take unto you seven Bullocks, and seven Rams, and go to my Servant Job, and my Servant Job shall pray for you,*

for him will I accept. Which was an high Honour put upon this holy Man, and imports not only his great Interest in God, but Eminency in Prayer. And how powerful an Intercessor with God was Moses? Let the Reader consult the following Texts for a Proof of this, *Exod. Chap. viii. 12, 30. Chap. ix. 33. Chap. x. 18. Chap. xiv. 15. Chap. xv. 25. Chap. xxxii. 10, 30, 31. Let me alone, saith God, that my Wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them. Samuel is also mentioned among these Worthies, and that deservedly, 1 Sam. Chap. viii. 6, 7, 8, &c. Chap. xii. 18, 23.*

And the same might be observed of David. The Book of Psalms is full of his private Devotions. Indeed almost every Providence brought him into his Oratory; as every Place was a sort of Oratory to him; *Adullam, Engedi, Mezar, Olivat, Maon.* He was constant and frequent therein. *In the Morning, Psal. v. 3. Psal. lix. 16. Psal. lxxxviii. 13. At Evening, and at Noon, Psal. lv. 17. He lived in Devotion, Psal. cxix. 164. Psal. cix. 4. Psal. xxxiv. 1. and, as it were, expir'd in it, 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. In short, this has been the Temper of all good Men, more or less, Josh. vii. 7, 8, 9. 1 Sam. i. 10, 11. 1 Kings v. 17. James v. 17, 18. Nehem. i. 4. Esther iv. 3, 16, &c.* Devotion is inseparable from the true Church, and real Members of it: *God inhabiteth the Praises of Israel. Is the God that beareth Prayer, to whom all Flesh shall come.* 'Tis mention'd as part of the Character of the pious Jews, that they were Men of Prayer. *This is the Generation of them that seek thy Face, O God of Jacob.* That Generation he had describ'd, who shall ascend into the Hill of the Lord, and who have clean Hands, and a pure Heart; all of them are Seekers of God,

Exod.

xxxiv. 9.

Num. xiv.

13.

Psal. xxii.

3.

Psal. lxxv.

2.

Psal. xxiv.

6.



God, as *Jacob* was: They are *Israelites*, Men of Worship and Devotion. And 'tis observable that the *Preselytes*, such as were serious among them, walked in the same Steps, and in the same Spirit. Thus we read of *Cornelius*, that he was a devout Man, and *prayed always*. He had his stated, *Acts x. 2.* and also his extraordinary Hours of Prayer, when he joined Fasting with Prayer, *ver. 30.* This was to act like a genuine Member of the Church; one that not only embraced the Profession, but was initiated into the Religion of the Church.

And should I go on to consider the Character, the Temper and Practice of the Members of the Christian Church, we should find them all under the same Biass and Bent of Mind towards God and Devotion: *Behold he prayeth*, saith the Lord to *Ananias*, concerning *Saul* the Persecutor, now a Convert; and the same may be observed of every true Convert in the World. Particular Instances here are needless; we are compass'd about with a Cloud of Witnesses. I appeal to the whole Community of the Faithful in this Matter; tho' all are not alike devout, yet all know something of Devotion, and live in the Exercise of it. Christ supposes his Disciples would pray, and therefore gives them Rules for the Performance of the Duty, *Mat. vi. 6.* and the Apostle makes it part of the Description of Christians, *that they call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord.* Christians are *1 Cor. i.* Men of Prayer and Devotion; always were so, <sup>2.</sup> and always will be so to the End of the World. The New Testament affords us such Hints as will warrant us to conclude this concerning them; and the History of the Church confirms it. Devotion has ever been an eminent Part of the Character of the Christian Church, in which some have exceeded,



Cave's  
Primitive  
Christians,  
Part I. p.  
267.

exceeded. *Eusebius* saith of *James* the Just, that his Knees became hard and brawny by frequent Devotion; and the same *Nazianzen* notes of his Sister *Gorgonia*. The Historian saith of *Constantine* the Emperor, that tho' he was burden'd with the Cares of so vast an Empire, yet he would every Day, at his wonted Hours, retire into his Closet, and upon his Knees offer up his Prayers to God. And to manifest to the World that he was not ashamed of his Duty, and let them know what it was he chiefly delighted in, he caused his Image in all his gold Coins, Pictures and Statues, to be represented in the Posture of a Person praying, with his Hands spread abroad, and his Eyes lifted up towards Heaven. 'Tis said of him that he accounted it a greater Honour to be a Member of the Church, than Head of the Empire: And how like such a one doth he seem whilst in this Posture? But I need not produce particular Instances in a Case I suppose general. The Argument is, that what has been the Practice of the Church of God in all Ages of the World, must be look'd upon as Matter of Duty to all the Members of the Church. Man is a religious, a worshipping Creature; so by the Frame and Constitution of his Mind; all the Faithful have been more or less Persons of Devotion; consequently such as are Strangers to it, and live without it, have no Reason to reckon themselves of the Number.

6<sup>thly</sup>, As the Members of the Church have from Age to Age lived in Devotion, and maintained Intercourse with God, so the glorious Head of the Church, the Son of God, when he came into the World, was an eminent Example of Devotion, of secret Devotion. He often withdrew from Company, and from his Disciples, and prayed alone: When he had sent the Multitude away, he

he went up into a Mountain apart to pray, saith *Matthew*, Chap. xiv. 23. So Chap. xxvi. 36.—45. He withdrew himself into the Wilderness, and prayed, *Luke* v. 16. *Mark* tells us, that in the Morning, rising up a great while before Day, he departed into a solitary Place, and there pray'd, Chap. i. 35. And in the Text 'tis said, *he went out into a Mountain to pray, and continued all Night in the Oratory of God.* He had his Hands full of Work Luke vi. 12. all Day, of religious Work, divine Work; but that doth not excuse him from the Duties of Retirement. At one Time he's up all Night in his Oratory; at another time he rises a great while before Day to get into it; he would rather want Time for Sleep than Prayer. And how loud an Admonition is this to us? How great a Conviction of the Obligation of the Duty? If it be said he had more difficult Work to go thro', than we: I answer, he had a proportionable Unction and Ability; a more constant habitual Fitness for any Service: He was call'd, tho' he had no Corruptions or Disorders of Frame; no sinful Aversion to pray against; and yet how constant a Supplicant? and how importunate? *Heb.* v. 7. That herein he might have regard to his own Occasions, was before supposed; but no question, he also, if not chiefly, design'd our Instruction, and to set us an Example, that we should do as he has done; as he saith in another Case, *John* xiii. 15. Nor are we his Disciples, unless we imitate him in this, as well as other Excellencies, and have something of the same Mind in us, that was also in him.

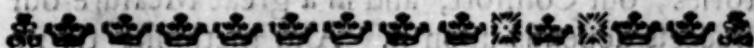
7<sup>thly</sup>, Such is the State and Condition of Christians, their Dependence on God; their Insufficiency of themselves, for the Work and Business of Religion, without Recruits and Supplies from above

bove, that the Plea of Necessity in this Case is enough to prove the Duty before us, and indeed may supersede all farther Argument. If it be asked how I will prove 'tis a Man's Duty to eat, drink, and sleep? I answer, because he cannot otherwise live: 'Tis his Duty to preserve his Life, and these are necessary Means thereof, and so 'tis here. The Exercises of Retirement, Meditation, Prayer, &c. are the appointed Means of deriving all kind of spiritual Supplies from above. Hereby the Christian is strengthened for his Warfare, enabled to encounter and stand his Ground against his Enemies, *Eph. vi. 12, 18.* Hereby he gets his Mind fortified against the World, and the Impression of sensible Things; his Heart poised and ballasted; his Corruptions subdued, and Passions kept in some *Decorum*; and in a Word, hereby he obtains Assistance answerable to his Occasions, Grace to help in time of Need. I dare appeal to all serious, sensible Persons in the World in this Matter, whether they don't find that Religion prospers or decays in the Soul, according to their Constancy and Diligence in the Duties of the Closet; and that while they continue with their Hands lifted up in their Oratory, they prevail against their Enemies; but when they are let down, their Enemies prevail, to allude to that *Exod. xvii. 11.* In short, our Graces will languish, and Spirits flag, unless refreshed by constant Intercourse with the great paternal Spirit. Even the Soul of Christ, tho' in a State of Innocence and Perfection, had so much Feeling of it's Dependence, as to seek Supports, Supplies, and Comfort from his God and Father by constant Devotion. And can we think to be safe in the Midst of so many Dangers; to be successful in Religion, bear up against the mighty Opposition of our Enemies without,



without, and a dead Weight of Corruption within, in the Neglect of the same Means?

In a Word, the Duties I have been recommending, are not only Part of the Homage we owe to God, as his Creatures, but Part of the necessary Care we owe to ourselves: And as we are new Creatures, may be placed among the Principles of Self-preservation. To neglect them, is to neglect the Means of our Safety and spiritual Life; and indeed if the Neglect be total, it argues us destitute of Life. A Christian without his Oratory, without Converse with Heaven, is but the Image of a Christian; he is like Man in Arras, a poor, meager, lifeless thing: So that this Argument may be reckon'd conclusive, and I shall close the Head with it, that we ought to maintain Intercourse with God in Retirement, because that is our Strength and our Life.



C H A P. V.

*The Conclusion. The Duties of the Oratory recommended, especially to three sorts of Persons. Directions and Helps for carrying on the prescribed Method of Closet-Devotion. Some Objections answered.*



**I**T is no small Part of my Work that is behind, should I pursue my Intention, viz. To shew the Excellency and many Advantages of a devout Temper: To direct how to acquire, preserve and improve it: To take Notice of the chief Impediments of it, with



with Cautions against them. But as I think it necessary to put an End to the Discourse as soon as possible, tho' it be somewhat abruptly, I shall omit these things, and no farther trespass on the Reader's Patience, only beg leave to recommend the proposed Method of Closet-Religion very briefly to three sorts of Persons especially.

(1) To Ministers. There is no mean Sense in the Saying of *Luther*, that three Things make a Minister, *Meditation*, *Temptation*, and *Prayer*. The more we converse with God and our own Heart, the fitter we shall be for the Duties of our Function: These retired Exercises will derive Strength and Ability for publick Performances, and give them another sort of a Life, than the dry Discourses of common Orators; both the Speaker and Hearer knows this to be true. In short, our Work demands it of us, that we be much in our Oratories; our Comfort, and in a great Measure our Success depends upon it. And methinks 'tis no small Admonition to us, that our great Master, after he had spent the Day in the publick Duties of his Office, preaching, working Miracles, &c. so often retired, and spent the whole, or part of Night in secret Devotion: If he needed such Exercises, how much more do we? 'Tis indeed the great Advantage of our Profession, that it gives us a Recess from the World, and special Opportunity for conversing with God and spiritual Subjects; and it exceedingly concerns us to improve it for this Purpose, and not suffer our Spirits to be too much tinctured of the World, and our Time wasted in worldly Pursuits, Company, Diversions, &c. Ministers are called *Angels*, and should, like them, be always beholding the Face of their Father in Heaven, or ministering to Men on Earth.

'Tis

'Tis not my Design to enlarge here ; nor shall I take upon me to teach those, of whom I ought and desire to learn, but I beg leave to say, we are very unlike *Men of God*, if we have little Converse with God. As we speak to Men in the Name of God, we should *come from God*, when we speak to them, if we would be heard.

(2) Another Sort of Persons to whom especially I would recommend these Duties, is the Men of Estates and Education, that are free from the Confinements of Trades and Callings. These ordinarily have Time enough at command ; and indeed would be at a loss, many of them, how to dispose of it, did not their Diversions and Pleasures come in to their Assistance. They have 10 or 12, or more Hours every day lying upon their Hands, void of any Incumbrance, but what they unnecessarily bring upon themselves ; and how inexcusable must they be, if they can't find an Hour or two in 24, for the Oratory, for the Affairs of Religion, of their Souls and Eternity ? The Plea of *Gentlemen* will serve for nothing, but to aggravate the Guilt of their Pride, Sloth, Neglect and Perversion of Talents. There is a natural Equity in that of our Saviour, *To whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required ; and to whom Men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.* Luke xii. 48. These Persons have more Time, Capacity, Helps and more Opportunity for Religion than others, and therefore ought to attend it the more diligently ; and if they do not, their Account at last will be but uncomfortable.

(3) The same may be said of Persons of Fullness in the World, tho' engaged in Business. They have Callings to mind, but the Bounty of Providence has freed them from Drudgery : They don't eat the Bread of Carefulness and Sorrow, but have Time enough for necessary Business and necessary Devotion.

tion. If they don't find it so, the Reason is Mismanagement; they don't rightly divide their Time between this World and the next, allowing to each a due Proportion, but love the World better than their Souls, and therefore for the sake of the one neglect the other.

I might largely expostulate with these and the others before-mentioned, Men of Substance and Estate, whether in Callings, or out of them: Consider God expects more from you; more Time spent in Devotions, than from any others. Under the Law Regard was had to the Circumstances of Persons in their Sacrifices: Such whose Poverty would not allow them a more costly Offering, might bring Turtles or Pigeons, *Lev. xii. 8.* So 'tis with Reference to our spiritual Sacrifices under the Gospel. They that want Leisure or Parts, their meaner and shorter Services in the Oratory may be effectual to obtain Blessings and Comforts, and be accepted of God; but where Persons have more Time and Ability, better things are expected from them. God will despise their corrupt thing, when they have a Male in the Flock. A Quarter of an Hour may, by the special Blessing of God, to be hoped for in such a Case, turn to a better Account with a Servant or poor Labourer, that knows not how to redeem more, than an Hour with those that have their whole Time at their own Dispose.

I might add your Occasions make these Duties exceedingly necessary; Riches and Fullness administer to Pride and Luxury; betray Persons into innumerable Temptations; ingage them much in worldly Commerce and Company; all which make Retirement, Recollection and frequent Devotion necessary; the Christian, in such Circumstances, can't be safe without it, he will soon be off his Basis and Guard, and lose his Frame, if he neglect it:



it. I dare appeal for this to all the serious Part of Mankind. 'Tis a gross Mistake to think Religion and Devotion belongs only to Seclufes, Men shut up in Cloisters, or whose Business is Study and Contemplation: None need it more than *Seculars*, Men of the World, and that are much conversant in the World. Even Christ himself, when he had been in the World (tho' not about the Affairs of the World) the greatest Part of the Day, saw Occasion to sequester, and get alone at Night in his Oratory; and can we be safe without such divine Auxiliaries? We, who are more exposed to Temptations, and are less able to bear them!

Once more, consider the main Good of an Estate lies in its Subserviency to the Ends of Religion. There are two Things chiefly that an Estate is valuable for, as it gives a Man an Opportunity of being useful in the World, rich in good Works, and sowing more liberally for Eternity, and affords him more Leisure and Help for Devotion, cultivating his own Mind, conversing with God, and waiting on all the Means and Ministries of Religion. If both these be neglected, an Estate is a Curse and not a Blessing, and the Owner will wish, and wish again, that he had served God in Poverty and Rags, rather than have been full and denied him. I know Men of a Worldly Spirit and Taste, that have no higher Principle than Sense and judge of all Things from their Convenience to their Appetites, won't come into this; but it is nevertheless true for all that, and they will find it so at last.

Well consider these Things, and attend to your Duty: Whilst you do so, you are serving your own Interest in the most effectual Manner, and improving the Advantage of that Station, and those Circumstances the Providence of God has



placed you in, otherwise your Riches, Plenty and Leisure is lost, and will only run into your future Account to enhance your Guilt and Condemnation. To conclude, all of us are more or less concerned in these Duties, and consequently in the Exhortation, and so I would be understood; for tho' I have mention'd some Persons, as having special Advantages for them, and on that account, more peculiarly obliged to them; yet others, that don't come within these Distinctions, should look upon themselves concern'd, some more than others, but all in some Degree, according to their Capacity and Leisure; but thyself render into the Number. 'Tis a good Work I would engage thee in, an honourable and profitable Work; if thou hast neglected it, neglect it no longer; if thou hast been inconstant, partial and defective, confining thy Devotion to one Branch, as Prayer for Instance, do so no more, but endeavour to extend thy Devotion in the Manner prescribed. Provide an Oratory, get it suitably furnish'd with such Books as may be helpful, and make the best Use of them thou canst: Remember that of the Psal-

*Psal. xcii. mist. 'Tis a good Thing to give Thanks unto the Lord, and to sing Praise unto thy Name, O most High; to shew forth thy loving Kindness in the Morn-*

*Psal. lv. 17. ing, and thy Faithfulness every Night. And again. Evening and Morning, and at Noon will I pray. and cry aloud, and he shall hear my Voice. Let your Conversation be in Heaven, in this respect; your Traffick and Commerce there; suffer no Day to pass without Intercourse with God in the Duties of Worship; reading the Scripture, Prayer, Meditation, &c. and have your Times for the more thorough and solemn Discharge of these Offices, as before advised.*

Argu-

Arguments and Motives, how much soever due to the Subject, I can't now make Room for, and therefore shall shut up all with a few Directions, which I shall leave with such as are desirous to pursue this Scheme and Method of Devotion, and are solicitous about a Fitness for it.

(I.) Endeavour for a Spirit of Devotion ; for a Temper and Frame that suits Work of this kind ; the Foundation of which is laid in Sanctification, or the inward Renewing of our Natures. This is absolutely necessary to the Performance of religious Duties with Success, particularly those of solemn Worship. Except a Man be born again, *John iii. 3.* born of Water and of the Spirit, saith Christ, he <sup>5.</sup> can't enter into the Kingdom of God, *i. e.* as some understand it, he can't be a Member of the *Messiah's* Kingdom, or of the Christian Church. He is not qualified to discharge the Duties, nor partake of the Privileges of it. All the Members of the Church, as I before hinted, are in their several Degrees Men of Devotion, and accordingly have a new and divine Nature, Principles adopted to Religion ; they are not of the World, but chosen and taken out of it ; distinguish'd by another, an higher and more excellent Spirit, which they <sup>1.</sup> *Cor. ii.* have received, favouring the Things of God. <sup>12.</sup> They are Temples of the Holy Ghost, consecrated to Worship, and disposed for heavenly Con- <sup>Gal. iv. 6.</sup> verse. *God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their Hearts, crying Abba Father.* Labour that you may be such true *Church-men*, having the Heart and Temper of the Church, otherwise the Duties of solemn Worship will be your Aver- sion and Burden ; you will be reprobate to them. You may sometimes be carried to them by external Impulse and Motives, but wanting the inward Principle, all your Service will have but a

Job xxvii.  
10.

Shadow of Devotion ; be unsteady and formal, without Heart and Life. The Hypocrite can't delight himself in the Almighty, nor will he always call upon God. I might observe besides this fundamental Requisite the Truth of Grace in the Heart, some Improvement in Grace is also necessary, and included in the Spirit of Devotion. It notes a Mind happily turn'd this way, bent for Devotion ; competent Skill and Ability for the Work ; Freedom and Delight in it ; an Heart following hard after God, turned and set for this heavenly Employment ; that knows how to relish the Pleasures of Worship, and triumph therein. Pray for and get such an Heart, and the Business is done ; Arguments and indeed farther Directions will be in a great Measure needless. If you want such an Heart, beg for it with the utmost Importunity, and rest not till you have obtain'd it. Make great account of a devotional Temper ; value the least Improvement of this kind more than all earthly Riches and Honours : And if you thus seek the Blessing, with this Esteem and Preference of it, you shall not long want it. God will give his Holy Spirit to them that in this mannner ask it.

Luke xi.  
13.

(2dly,) Accustom yourselves to Retirement, and to solemn Converse with God therein : Not only be patient of it, but endeavour to love it, and delight in it. Guard against every thing that would keep you out of your Oratory ! Sloth, Ease, Excess of worldly Business, Diversions, Pleasures, Company, &c. The Conversation of our Friends, that most agreeable Enjoyment, must be used with Caution. *Amici fures Temporis*, saith Lord Bacon ; Friends often rob us of our Time ; we should take Care they do not rob us of our best Time ; the sacred Hours of Devotion. Frequent Evening Visits, Games and Clubs must be watch'd against.  
Self-

Self-denial must be exercis'd in these and other Matters, and an holy Resolution put on, if we would engage in, and follow the Method of Devotion prescribed. In short, make such Exercis'es your chief Solace and Comfort, and you will not admit every little Vocation and Excuse from them. And methinks the Importance and Advantage of the Work should carry in it its own Security; here the Soul trims and decks for Heaven, and wipes off the Sullage it contracts by worldly Converse, and intermixing so much with Things below. Many may join in *Seneca's* Complaint, "*Nunquam a turba mores quos extuli refero, aliquid ex eo quod composui turbatur, &c.*" I can seldom preserve my Manners and Temper in a Crowd of Company: I find something or other disorder'd, I had endeavour'd to set right. Much Conversation is hurtful to me." Now in Retirement we recover ourselves, wind up the depressed Mind towards Heaven, and get the Frame rectified again. I mean it gives us an Opportunity of doing this; has this Tendency, and by the Blessing of God, will have this Effect. Innumerable indeed are the Advantages of devout Retirement; endeavour to understand what they are, that your Experience may invite you, and your Affections keep you to it; so that it may become your Entertainment, and then, no question, it will be your Practice.

3dly, Make the Devotion of the Closet subservient to an holy Life, a Means of promoting and advancing it, in all the Branches thereof. If your Devotion make you proud, censorious, uncharitable, sour and unfociable; ready to justify yourselves, and despise others; and to say, stand by thyself, I am holier than thou; much more if you take Encouragement from thence to Acts of In-



justice, Fraud, or fleshly Indulgence; 'tis a false Devotion, and looks like the Sacrifice of the Wicked, which is an Abomination to the Lord. The frequent Reviews we made of ourselves, of our Hearts and Lives in our Closets, should be in Order to correct the Irregularities and Indecencies thereof. We converse with God and ourselves that we may be better fitted to converse with others. Our private Censures, with the penitential Acknowledgments that accompany them, tend to polish and refine us, and shew us to the World without Spot, or with fewer Spots; with a Cloathing of wrought Gold, shining in all the Graces of the divine Spirit; meek, humble, courteous, kind and beneficent; let us endeavour, that it may be so with us: *Non est vera Religio, quæ cum Templo relinquitur*; 'Tis not true Religion, saith *Lactantius*, which a Man leaves behind him at Church; and the same may be said of the Closet; true Religion is not confined there, but issues forth, and by its Streams refreshes and adorns the Conversation. The Devotion of the Closet should appear in its good Effects in our Conduct out of it; in the constant Integrity and Usefulness of our Converse; I may add, in the Security of our Minds, and Chearfulness of our Behaviour. A cloudy Face is far from being the natural Result of true Devotion; it rather tends to paint the Countenance with Rays of divine Light and Joy, and give a Lustre to it that's amiable and inviting, than fill it with frightful Glooms. Certainly none in the World have so much Cause to be chearful, as holy and devout Men. They that have a good God, and a good Conscience to converse with, and are upon good Terms with both, have a continual Feast; and no doubt, it becomes them to be merry at it. But I must not enlarge here, nor add farther Directions,

nor

nor can I distinctly answer the Objection some may pretend to make against this Method of Devotion. I call them pretended, because I reckon them rather Excuses for Sloth and Disaffection than real Reasons, even in the Judgment of the Objectors themselves.

Some object Want of Time ; and I before allow'd this would excuse, when it can truly be pleaded. Not that I suppose any Christians can want Time for all Devotion, so much as a short Prayer ; but some may want Time for Reading, Meditation, &c. and from these less will be accepted. But how few can, with any Modesty, join in this Pretence ? I leave the Reader to consult his own Conscience, and answer for himself whether he can or not ; whether he can't every Day redeem one Hour in 24 for the Oratory, or at least twice a Week, as was proposed.

Some may object, this is more than needs. A Man may get to Heaven without so much ado : But methinks this Pretence ill becomes Christians that profess to believe Eternity, and to make Religion their Business. It ill becomes those that are so keen about the World, and ready to run over one another in Pursuit of it. 'Tis certain the less Religion we have here, the less Heaven we shall have hereafter, supposing a lower Degree of it sufficient to carry us thither : Not to say that if we desire but little Grace, 'tis an Argument we have none at all.

I am asham'd to mention it as an Objection, though some may be found so far perverting the Gospel of Christ and Scheme of Christian Religion, as to make it, *that this favours Legalism*. We are to be saved, say they, by believing, and not working ; by Christ, and in a Way of Free-Grace. If the Meaning be, that Grace saves us without  
X x 4 sanctifying

sanctifying us ; that Christ was holy and devout in our Stead, and to excuse us from being so ; it's downright Enthusiasm, and subverts the whole Gospel. We are to be saved by Christ, it's granted ; but he saves us *from our Sins*, not *in them* (indulged and allow'd). His Salvation and Grace appears most eminently in the Refinement and Perfection of our Minds ; the Spirituality and Devotion of our Frames. The more of this any attain to, the more they are indebted to Grace, and the more they will celebrate Grace both sanctifying and pardoning Grace. In short, the Gospel is the highest Dispensation of Religion ; contains the strictest Rules, as well as affords the strongest Motives and greatest Encouragements. Christ is the most sublime Doctor and Master, and his School the highest School of Wisdom and Divine Philosophy in the World : and to say we hope to be saved by Christ, and thereupon take up with a low groveling State of Religion, is to disgrace our Profession, and abuse our Master.

To conclude ; every thing in our Circumstances and Case, calls us to our *Oratory*. God requires such Work of us, and we need it. Our Master has set us the most illustrious Example : Here we have the best Company and best Employment : This is *Beniel* and *Bethel*, if we behave aright in it ; the House of God and the Gate of Heaven : And tho' we must not expect to be transfigured, and shine like *Christ* on his Mount, or *Moses* on his ; we may hope for those Enjoyments that will make us say, *'tis good to be here*, longing at the same time to be above.

20 MA 59

FINIS.

# A TABLE OF THE TEXTS.

## GENESIS.

| Chap. | Verse.          | Page.     |
|-------|-----------------|-----------|
| i     | <i>per tot.</i> | 22        |
| ii    | <i>per tot.</i> | 36 & seq. |
|       | 17              | 204       |
| iii   | 10              | 660       |
| v     | 24              | 661       |
| xviii | 19              | 448       |
| xxi   | 33              | 661       |
| xxiv  | 63              | 661       |
| xxxii | 9-13            | 662       |
|       | 24, 26, 30      | 662       |

## EXODUS.

|       |        |          |
|-------|--------|----------|
| xx    | 24     | 464      |
| xxxiv | 30, 35 | 222, 154 |

## LEVITICUS.

|     |    |     |
|-----|----|-----|
| xix | 13 | 462 |
|-----|----|-----|

## DEUTERONOMY.

|       |        |         |
|-------|--------|---------|
| vi    | 6, 7   | 71, 450 |
| xi    | 18     | 96      |
| xvii  | 18, 19 | 70      |
| xxi   | 23     | 289     |
| xxxii | 49, 50 | 533     |
| xxxiv | 5      | 533     |

## JOB.

| Chap. | Verse. | Page. |
|-------|--------|-------|
| i     | 9      | 514   |
| xix   | 25     | 159   |

## PSALMS.

|        |                 |           |
|--------|-----------------|-----------|
| i      | <i>per tot.</i> | 23 & seq. |
| i      | <i>begin.</i>   | 92        |
| ii     | <i>per tot.</i> | 33 & seq. |
| iv     | <i>per tot.</i> | 43        |
|        | 4               | 97, 576   |
| xi     | 5               | 415       |
| xiv    | 1               | 234       |
| xv     | 2               | 490       |
| xix    | 7               | 62        |
| xxiv   | 6               | 664       |
| xxxii  | 10              | 484       |
| xxxiv  | 9               | 53        |
| xl     | 6, 7, 8         | 269       |
| xliv   | 13              | 413       |
| lxvi   | 18              | 466       |
| lxxiii | 17              | 234       |
| lxxiv  | 3               | 3         |
| lxxxiv | 1-4 and 10      | 476       |
|        | 4               | 487       |
| xcii   | 11, 12          | 526       |
| xcii   | 1, 2            | 643       |
| c      | 3, 4            | 657       |



# A TABLE

| Chap.  | Verse. | Page. |
|--------|--------|-------|
| cx     | 3      | 300   |
| cxī    | 10     | 25    |
| cxix   | 18     | 66    |
|        | 46     | 403   |
| cxxxix | 1, &c. | 405   |
|        | 18     | 401   |

## PROVERBS.

|       |        |     |
|-------|--------|-----|
| iii   | 6      | 54  |
|       | 5, 6   | 388 |
| vi    | 21, 22 | 401 |
| xxii  | 5      | 448 |
| xxiii | 17     | 399 |

## ECCLESIASTES.

|     |    |     |
|-----|----|-----|
| ii  | 11 | 206 |
| xii | 7  | 122 |

## CANTICLES.

|    |       |          |
|----|-------|----------|
| i  | 2     | 282      |
|    | 1, 3  | 594      |
|    | 3, 4  | 289      |
| ii | 1, 2  | 278      |
|    | 4, 5  | 283      |
| v  | 10—16 | 278, 281 |

## ISAIAH.

|      |    |     |
|------|----|-----|
| lvii | 15 | 419 |
|------|----|-----|

## EZEKIEL.

|       |    |     |
|-------|----|-----|
| xxxvi | 27 | 377 |
|-------|----|-----|

## DANIEL.

|    |    |          |
|----|----|----------|
| vi | 10 | 644, 663 |
|----|----|----------|

## MALACHI.

|   |   |     |
|---|---|-----|
| i | 6 | 657 |
|---|---|-----|

| Chap. | Verse. | Page. |
|-------|--------|-------|
|-------|--------|-------|

## MATTHEW.

|       |                 |           |
|-------|-----------------|-----------|
| i     | <i>per tot.</i> | 28 & seq. |
|       | 21, 22, 31      | 680       |
| vi    | 6               | 12, 641   |
| vii   | 1, 2            | 503       |
|       | 11              | 380       |
|       | 12              | 495       |
| xiii  | 12              | 375       |
| xvii  | 5               | 431       |
| xviii | 20              | 464       |
| xx    | 16              | 306       |
| xxii  | 32, 33          | 168       |
|       | 37, 38          | 50        |
| xxiii | 8               | 429       |
|       | 29              | 163       |
| xxv   | 15 & seq.       | 361       |
|       | 40              | 285       |
| xxvii | 45, 51, 52      | 291       |
|       | 52, 53          | 167       |



## LUKE.

|      |           |           |
|------|-----------|-----------|
| ii   | 7         | 271       |
| vi   | 12        | 2, 3, 618 |
| xi   | 13        | 367, 375  |
|      |           | 380, 676  |
| xiii | 24        | 263       |
| xv   | 7         | 420       |
| xvi  | 22 & seq. | 108, 201  |
|      | 25        | 479       |

## JOHN.

|     |      |     |
|-----|------|-----|
| i   | 14   | 270 |
| iii | 2    | 429 |
|     | 3, 5 | 675 |
| vi  | 27   | 157 |
|     | 39   | 169 |
| xii | 26   | 481 |

xii

*of the* TEXTS.

| Chap.                 | Verse.            | Page.             | Chap.                           | Verse.     | Page.             |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| xiv                   | 2<br>16<br>23, 24 | 236<br>350<br>285 |                                 | 58         | 433               |
| xv                    | 13                | 267               | <b>2 CORINTHIANS.</b>           |            |                   |
| xxi                   | 15, 16            | 284               | iii                             | 18         | 368               |
| <b>A C T S.</b>       |                   |                   | iv                              | 18         | 137               |
| iii                   | 14                | 482               | v                               | 1          | 112, 150          |
| vii                   | 55, 56            | 237               |                                 | 4          | 126, 185          |
| viii                  | 30                | 20                | viii                            | 9          | 271               |
| ix                    | 11                | 335, 629<br>665   | xii                             | 2, 4       | 196               |
| x                     | 2, 30             | 665               |                                 | 8          | 592, 594          |
| xxvi                  | 19                | 316               | xiii                            | 5          | 568               |
|                       |                   |                   | <b>GALATIANS.</b>               |            |                   |
| <b>R O M A N S.</b>   |                   |                   | i                               | 11, 12, 16 | 318               |
| i                     | 6, 7              | 306               | iii                             | 2          | 89                |
| ii                    | 28, 29            | 333               |                                 | 13         | 289               |
| v                     | 6                 | 267               | v                               | 22, 23     | 300               |
| vi                    | 14                | 300               |                                 | 23         | 352               |
| viii                  | 17                | 47                |                                 | 24         | 339               |
|                       | 6                 | 191               | <b>E P H E S I A N S.</b>       |            |                   |
|                       | 11                | 145               | i                               | 17         | 66, 352           |
|                       | 16                | 573               | ii                              | 1, 5       | 191               |
|                       | 18                | 250               |                                 | 5          | 260               |
|                       | 23                | 169               |                                 | 18, 19     | 351               |
|                       | 26                | 622               | iii                             | 18, 19     | 267               |
|                       | 29                | 33                | v                               | 2          | 273               |
|                       | 32                | 295               |                                 | 18, 19     | 633               |
| <b>I CORINTHIANS.</b> |                   |                   | vi                              | 18         | 630               |
| vi                    | 9, 10             | 256               | <b>P H I L L I P P I A N S.</b> |            |                   |
| vii                   | 31                | 398               | i                               | 19         | 350               |
| ix                    | 25                | 53                | ii                              | 12, 13     | 331, 374          |
| x                     | 31                | 455               | iii                             | 21         | 145, 150          |
| xi                    | 10                | 465               | iv                              | 11         | 392               |
| xii                   | 10                | 411               |                                 | 13         | 411               |
| zv                    | 10                | 298, 313<br>324   | <b>C O L O S S I A N S.</b>     |            |                   |
|                       | 20                | 165               | iii                             | 16         | 47, 73, 83,<br>97 |
|                       | 35—45             | 150               |                                 |            |                   |
|                       | 51, 52            | 178               |                                 |            |                   |
|                       | 53                | 145               |                                 |            |                   |
|                       |                   |                   | <b>Chap.</b>                    |            |                   |

# A TABLE, &c.

| Chap. | Verfe. | Page. | Chap. | Verfe. | Page. |
|-------|--------|-------|-------|--------|-------|
|-------|--------|-------|-------|--------|-------|

## I THESSALONIANS.

|     |    |        |    |    |     |
|-----|----|--------|----|----|-----|
| iii | 17 | 548    | iv | 11 | 510 |
| v   | 13 | 645    |    |    |     |
| iv  | 6  | 503    |    |    |     |
| v   | 17 | 641, 2 |    |    |     |

## I TIM.

|    |    |     |     |    |     |
|----|----|-----|-----|----|-----|
| ii | 1  | 505 | iii | 21 | 430 |
| iv | 8  | 347 | v   | 5  | 53  |
| i  | 14 | 313 |     |    |     |

## 2 TIM.

|     |        |          |    |         |     |
|-----|--------|----------|----|---------|-----|
| i   | 12     | 347      | i  | 5, 6, 7 | 409 |
| iii | 16, 17 | 566, 567 | 10 | 569     | 463 |
| iv  | 16, 17 | 359      | 18 | 463     | 463 |

## TITUS.

|     |    |     |   |          |          |
|-----|----|-----|---|----------|----------|
| ii  | 12 | 342 | i | 1        | 307      |
| iii | 2  | 510 | 2 | 213, 222 | 213, 222 |

## HEBREWS.

|     |        |          |      |           |     |
|-----|--------|----------|------|-----------|-----|
| iv  | 16     | 354, 592 | i    | 5         | 265 |
| ix  | 5      | 465      | 5, 6 | 279       | 279 |
|     | 27     | 106      | ii   | 7         | 200 |
| xi  | 24, 25 | 56       | iv   | 8, 10     | 220 |
| xii | 2      | 431      | xiv  | 13        | 217 |
|     | 9      | 131      | xvi  | 15        | 407 |
|     | 23     | 213, 220 | xxi  | 12 & seq. | 210 |

## JAMES.

|   |    |    |  |  |  |
|---|----|----|--|--|--|
| i | 21 | 58 |  |  |  |
|---|----|----|--|--|--|

## REVELATIONS.

20 MA 59

A N

# ALPHABETICAL INDEX

O F

## Principal Maters.

A.

- A**CCOUNT, *future to be given, and what.* Page 132
- Actions. *Doubtful, must have Recourse in these to the Rule of doing as we would be done unto.* 505
- Adam. *His Body glorious. The Glory of it thought by some a Model of that at the Resurrection.* 184
- Affairs, *publick. God's Providence to be owned in these.* 386
- Affliction or Adversity, *his Providence to be owned in this,* 385
- Ages and Periods of Life, *how distinguish'd. Which to be preferred.* 536, & seq.
- Ambition, *most Mens which way directed, 442. The Objects of the Christians, especially if of higher Attainment in Religion.* 444
- Analogy of Faith, *what wont to be so called.* 60
- Angels. *Their Appearance and Ministry, a Proof of another State.* 239
- Angelical Vehicles. 156
- Antinomianism refuted. 378, 413, 679
- Applause of Men. *Good to be mortified to it.* 434
- Archbishop of Cambray. *Some Character of him and his Writings, 563. What his absolute Resignation to the pretended Head of the Church may teach.* ibid.
- Aspirations, *devout ones.* 121, 144, 195
- Assurance, *of our good Estate possible, 568. Self-Examination, the Way to come at it, 569. A useful Direction given for managing this so as to attain it.* 570
- Author of Religion of Nature, *animadverted on for what he says about Prayer.* 620
- Authority humane, *not to make Creeds nor Comments for Christians.* 60
- Authority of Scripture Testimonies *for this as our only Rule, ib.*

Baptism,



# INDEX.

## B.

- B**aptism, Children to be devoted to God therein. Page 449  
 Beatific Vision. 222  
 Believers, have Comfort and Peace afforded from the Death of Christ. 294  
 Bible. *The Word of God. Arguments to prove it so, 80, & seq. Main Scope of it contained in several general comprehensive Laws and Maxims.* 50  
 Bigottry and blind Zeal. 515  
 Bishop Leighton, Notice taken of him, and Extracts from his Letters. 389, 424  
 Body. How to be esteemed and valued, 112. Little Account to be made of those Enjoyments that are confined to it, 113. We should learn to abstract from it, and live above it, 114 and 118. Of the right moderating and using of it, 54, 193  
 Body, the same, what necessary to constitute this, 147, 148, 152, 156. An Objection against it answered, 177. Properties of the Resurrection-Body, 152—156, and 186—189. Glory of the Resurrection-Body, 184, 186. Whether it shall have all the same Parts or Members as now, and in the same Form. 176  
 Bodies of dead Saints, Regards to be shewn to them. 180  
 Boyle, some of his occasional Reflections quoted. 551, & seq.  
 Brazen Serpent, typical of Christ's Death.  
 Buying and Selling. 501

## C.

- C**alendar, appoint one whereby to fix a Method for reading the Scripture. 20  
 Call, twofold, external and internal, 306. Should be thankful for the former, but not rest in it, 307. Various Representations of the latter in Scripture, 307. This makes an universal Change, 308. The Way of God's operating herein above us to explain; but we may not for that Reason deny he does operate, 308. May conclude it is suitable to our Faculties, 309. An Hypothesis about the Manner proposed, ib. Means made use of in Effectual Calling various and different; so is God's Manner of proceeding herein, 310. The Christian not so much concerned to enquire into this, as the Thing itself, 330. The Truth of our Calling to be judged of by the lasting Effects, rather than the Circumstances, 324. See Conversion.  
 Callings, worldly, how to manage them aright. 402  
 Canticles. The Scope and Design of that Book. 282

Cannibals,

# INDEX.

- Cannibals. *Objection against the Resurrection, taken from their Practice, answered.* Page 175
- Character of Persons, how we should treat it. 499
- Characters. Many may be able to write fine ones of Virtue without possessing it. 555
- Of Persons who are to be shut out of Heaven. 256
- All Approaches to these to be avoided. *ibid.*
- Charity. 337
- Children, of instructing them. 449. 451. Disposing of them in the World. 452
- Christ, his sending forth his Apostles. 2. Employed in Exercises of Devotion preparatory hereunto, 6. This was in a Proseucha or Jewish Prayer-House, the Night before. 2. What Occasion he had for such Exercises, and Reasons of his performing them. 8, 9. dependent and subject as Man, and in the Capacity of a Mediator. 8. The Quiescence of his Divinity. 9. His Pedigree and Genealogy. See Genealogy. Wonderful Conception and Birth. 30. and 271. Concerning his Name Jesus. 32. Why called the Seed of the Woman. 33. Served a Sort of Apprenticeship to the Carpenter's Trade. 273. His Sufferings. 128. See Crucifixion. His Example. See Example. The Interest he had in Publication of the Scripture. 83. His Personal Amiability. 278. Government, as Head and Lord of the Church. 274. The only Lord of Christians as such. 60. His Mediation to be constantly depended on as the Ground of our Title to Heaven. 264. His Righteousness of distinct Consideration from ours, and how. 414, 416. The Christian's Master. See Master. Exemplary for secret Devotion. 660. Being and conversing with him in Heaven, how delightful. 223. His Love so eminent and signal, that it is made his Character. See Love.
- Christian Religion, its Excellency. 179
- Christian, his Motto. 313. Daily Walk. See Fear of God, Strength wherein it lies. 411. When he acts like himself. 433. A Property of one well improved. 341
- Christians Primitive, Things remarkable and imitable in them. 76, 254, 450
- Closet Religion recommended to all. 674. Especially three Sorts, Ministers. 670. Gentlemen. 671. Persons of plentiful Circumstances, though in Trade. *ibid.* Directions and Helps for due carrying it on. 675. Objections against it answered. 679. Subservient to an holy Life. 677
- Comfort, to be drawn by Christians from the Resurrection. 185. From Heaven's Happiness. 250. Death of Christ. 294
- Commentators, what Notion to have of them, and which to prefer. 21

Complaints,

# INDEX.

- Complaints, of ourselves, several devout ones, 116, 117, 141, 251
- Company. *In Heaven, what.* 211
- *Here below, how to behave religiously in it.* 403
- Conscience, Offices belonging to it. 586. *to be kept faithful and tender.* *ibid.*
- Contentment. *Christian, what it implies.* 393. *To be endeavoured after.* *ibid.* *Considerations to promote it.* 394, &c. *Apostle Paul remarkable for it.* 392
- Conversion, God by his Spirit the Author. 311, 330. *Notwithstanding Means and Endeavours to be used by us.* 331. *The different Methods of Divine Grace herein: May be wrought suddenly, instantaneously, openly.* 197, 310, 319, or *gradually, secretly and insensibly.* 311, 318. *In a mild way, or with more Terror.* 311, 322, 325. *The Beginning of a religious Life to be dated from the Time of it.* 327. *Who can best give an Account of this.* 322
- Convert true, a short View of such an one; and the Effects of Divine Grace in his Soul represented, 335, & seq.
- Covenant of Redemption. 268
- Creation. Time, Particulars, Manner and Order of it. 22
- Proof of the Being and Perfections of God. *ibid.* *That of Man.* 37
- Crucifixion. Nature and Manner hereof. 288. *Christ's not accidental.* 287. *Full of Pain.* 218. *And Shame.* 289. *An accursed Death.* *ibid.* *Circumstances attending which aggravated the Suffering of it.* 290. *Improved.* 291.
- D.
- DAmnation. Every Man's is of himself. 379
- David, his Distress through Absalom's Rebellion. 41
- Exemplary for his Faith at the same Time. 43
- Day. to begin and close it with God. 405. *Lord's, how to be spent.* 644. *New Year's Devotional Exercises proper hereon.* 520
- Death, a general Word including all Sort of Misery. 38. *Nature of Death.* 107. *Consequences.* *ibid.* *Certainty.* 109. *Circumstances.* 110. *The Subject applied.* 112—121. *Of intimate Friends to be improved, and how.* 532, 535. *Sudden, whether Evil, and how far to be prayed against.* 533
- Deists, Reasons of Mens being so. See Infidels.
- Desires of good Men after Immortality and Happiness in another Life, a Proof hereof. 230
- *How Love to Christ may be shewn by these.* 286
- Devotion. By what Means to be assisted and enlivened. 578
- True,

# INDEX.

|                                                                                       |             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| True, distinguish'd from False by the Effects.                                        | Page 677    |
| Diary.                                                                                | 13, 59      |
| Diligence in worldly Affairs, teaching to the Christian, and wherein.                 | 545         |
| Diversions, how rightly to manage them.                                               | 404         |
| Divine Nature communicated, the most genuine constant Effect of the Grace of God.     | 336         |
| Duties moral, of everlasting Obligation, 417. See Obedience, Righteousness, Holiness. |             |
| Dying, to prepare for it, 115. Holy Resolves in Consideration of it.                  | 117, & seq. |

## E.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| <b>E</b> ducation of Children, a momentous Affair, 448. Ought to be religious, <i>ibid.</i> This oft followed with a Blessing, <i>ibid.</i> Rules for it.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 448—454 |
| Envy, what, 506. Observations concerning it, <i>ibid.</i> Spring and Cause of it, 507. Evil.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 508     |
| Envy at wicked Men's Prosperity to be guarded against, 480                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |         |
| Eternity of Heaven's Blessedness, 228. Evidences of it to be well studied.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 255     |
| Evil Speaking, what condemned, 511. When Persons guilty of it, 512. Causes of it, and Arguments against it.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 514     |
| Examination Self, Duty of Retirement, 565. Supposes a Rule by which to proceed, 567. What that is, 567. May respect our State, in order to know whether it be good or bad. (See State.) Or may respect our Frames, Words, and Ways, 575. This last a daily Duty. Motives to the Practice of it, taken from the Advantages: what these are, 577. Directions about it given, 581. Objections answered, 588. When more especially requisite. | 589     |
| Example of Christ, wherein designed for Imitation, 481, 482, and 55. None so perfect, 56. The Reasonableness of following it, 483. That of others highly instructive, but to be followed with Caution.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 57      |

## F.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                    |         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| <b>F</b> aith, when sincere, 68. Limited by Revelation, 180. Not without Ideas, <i>ibid.</i> May have for its Object Things whose Modus we don't understand, 180 and 431. Root of the Divine Life. | 336     |
| Failings, the best have some or other, 546. Considerations and Rules proper to prevent the undue Resentment of these which we are apt to have.                                                     | 546—551 |



# INDEX.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Fall, <i>Remedy provided against the Weakness of it sufficient.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                    | Page 376    |
| Family Worship. <i>Properest Times for it to be taken.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                             | 401         |
| Fear of God described. 53. <i>Put for the Whole of Religion in Scripture.</i> 400. <i>What meant by being in his Fear all the Day.</i>                                                                                                                 |             |
| <i>ibid. We should endeavour to attend this. Motives to quicken us, and Rules to be observed.</i>                                                                                                                                                      | 401—406     |
| Final State of Happiness.                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 196, & seq. |
| Folly of Sinners.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 248         |
| Foretastes of Heaven granted to some here.                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 239         |
| Forgiveness mutual, the Duty explained, and Helps for the Practice.                                                                                                                                                                                    | 518, 519    |
| Forgiving of Injuries.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 500         |
| Forms of Prayer allowable. 595. <i>In some Cases to be preferred.</i> 596. <i>Ordinarily attended with Inconveniencies.</i> 597. <i>Those who use them not to censure others who don't, &amp; vice versa.</i>                                          |             |
| Frame, <i>Pleasure of the heavenly one.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 216         |
| Friendship humane, oft founded in Iniquity. 542. <i>Virtuous rare.</i> 543. <i>And precarious.</i> <i>ibid. What to be learn'd from hence.</i>                                                                                                         | 543, 544    |
| Future State. <i>Properties of it.</i> 108. <i>Should acquaint ourselves with it.</i> 114. <i>Testimonies from Scripture to prove it.</i> 129. <i>Sensible Demonstration of it.</i> 130. <i>Generality of Men have discovered Apprehensions of it.</i> | 125         |
| Funeral Occasions to be improved, and how.                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 182         |

## G.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>G</b> Arments, <i>what implied in keeping these,</i> Rev. xvi. 15.                                                                                                                                                             | 408 |
| Genealogy, our Saviour's, in Matthew, vindicated, and Observations made on it.                                                                                                                                                    | 28  |
| Gentlemen, <i>To excel in respect to Devotion.</i> 671. <i>Motives.</i>                                                                                                                                                           | 672 |
| Glorifying God, the End of Man. 455. <i>What it means.</i> <i>ibid. May be done inwardly and outwardly.</i> 458. <i>Instances of glorifying him as to his several Attributes.</i> 455. <i>Exhortation to make this our Study.</i> | 458 |
| Glory of God, and our Interest connected.                                                                                                                                                                                         | 459 |
| God, his governing the World. <i>Vide Providence.</i> <i>Of acknowledging him in all our Ways.</i> 54. <i>Our Obligations to worship him demonstrated. See Worship.</i>                                                           |     |
| Golden Rule. <i>See Rule.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                     |     |
| Grace, the several Significations of the Term. 299. <i>Primary Notion of it Favour and good Will, which runs through all the</i>                                                                                                  | the |

# INDEX.

- the rest.* 361. *How much the Christian owes to it.* 302. *Of being called by it.* See Call.
- Grace** of God sovereign and victorious. 317. *Harmony between it and our Endeavours.* 331. *Glory of it secured, tho' the Necessity of Works and Obedience in order to future Happiness be asserted.* 259. *Many Disputes raised about it too intricate for vulgar Heads.* 367. *Conclusions that we must abide by in respect to it.* 368
- Grace** in the Soul, the Effects of it. 335, & seq. *Especially as it comes to prevail and have true Scope.* 343. *Will be perfect in Heaven.* 213
- Gravity habitual,** *Bishop Leighton, a remarkable Instance of it.* 425

## H.

- H**appiness, *the World has false Notions of it.* 26. *Not to be found here.* 207, 248, 252
- Heart.** *Of it's being impress'd by Scripture.* 47. *Begins to be so at Conversion, and is more perfectly so afterwards.* 48
- Hearing,** *what chiefly to propose to one's self in it.* 470
- Heaven,** *why called Paradise.* 200. *Is begun immediately after Death.* 201. *Won't be in Perfection till after the Resurrection, ibid.* *Is veil'd in a great Measure from us at present,* 202, 228. *Several Particulars touch'd upon unknown,* 202, 203. *May be holy however as to its general Nature,* 203, 204. *Metaphors by which its Happiness is represented the more particularly considered,* Negative, 205, & seq. *Positive,* 210, & seq. *Pleasures of the Place,* 210. *Company,* 211. *Inward State,* 213. *Frame,* 216. *Work,* 217. *Beatific Vision,* 222. *Being and conversing with Christ,* 223. *Reviewing our former State, and comparing it with the present,* 224. *Place of it unknown, but of great Magnificence,* 210. *Had a visible Shechinah,* 211. *Additional Pleasures after the Resurrection,* 224. *All its Felicity eternal,* 228. *Arguments to prove such a State,* 229, & seq. *Application of this Subject by way of Instruction,* 243. *Consolation,* 250. *Reproof, Consolation or Complaint of one's self,* 251. *Resolution,* 255. *False and true Notions of it,* 245. *Must be begun here,* 119, 256. *May have Reflections when got to it, that will be humbling, though none to disturb,* 581. *Sometimes more vigorous Efforts to be made towards it.* 264
- Holiness,** *not to be slighted nor neglected under Pretence of renouncing our own Righteousness,* 378. *The greatest Excellency we can attain to here, ibid.* *Its Necessity and Excellency*

## INDEX.

- Excellency how set forth in Scripture*, 418. *Recommended by four Considerations*, *ibid.* *Requisite on Account of worshipping God.* Page 446
- Holiness, of Places, none now, as formerly.* 462
- Hours Canonical, what.* 637
- Humility described*, 53, 338. *Most important capital Grace*, 63. *Mistaken Notions of it*, 413. *Necessary in reading the Scripture.* 62

### I.

- I**deas. *We neither know nor believe without them.* 180
- Jews. Their Hours of Prayer*, 635. *Have been imitated in these by Christians, but with Alterations and Additions*, 637. *Their laudable Care to train up their Children in the Knowledge of the Scriptures from Infancy*, 74, 450. *Province of their Masorets or Sopherim*, 75. *The Resurrection generally believed by them*, 160. *Prayer-Houses. See Proseuchæ.*
- Immortality of the Soul argued*, 122—133. *Applied*, 133—144
- Impossibilities, Men not bound to these.* 646
- Incarnation of Christ.* 271
- Indwelling of the Spirit, when it commences.* 351
- Infidels, the Reason assigned why many are so*, 244. *Their Cause unreasonable and inexcusable*, 243. *As to a future State guilty of what they charge on others*, 243. *Their Creed and the Christians compared.* 244
- Inspiration of Scripture.* 34
- Intermediate State.* 202
- Journies, how to employ one's Time in them, and how to review them.* 526, & seq.
- Judging of others*, 498. *For ourselves in Matters of Religion the great Right of humane Nature.* 500
- Justice of God. Arguments from hence for the Soul's Immortality, and a future State*, 126. *For the Resurrection*, 170. *After Retribution and final Happiness.* 480, 231

### K.

- K**nowledge of the unsanctified defective, so that it is reckoned as none, 67. *That of Saints in Heaven.* 214

### L.

- L**amb Paschal, typical of Christ. 287
- Law of God, what, according to Mr. Howe*, 66. *Observations on that given to Man in Innocency*, 37, 38. *Law*

# INDEX.

- Law of Sincerity what, and who uncondemned by it,* 258.  
*Of Evangelical Perfection, what, ibid. Sanctions of both,*  
 259  
*Laws, divine and moral, relating to God,* 52. *One's Neighbour, ibid. Ourselves,* 53. *Evangelical.* 55  
*Life human, its several Ages. See Ages. Shortness of what may be called Life.* 437  
*Life of Christ, Condition and Manner of it,* 272. *Last Scene how full of Tragedy.* 274, and 295  
*Love of Christ, a glorious Subject,* 265. *What it includes,* 266. *Properties of it,* 267. *Wherein manifested,* 269---276. *Should beget Love.* 276  
*Love to Christ, Want of this Matter of Lamentation,* 277. *Should endeavour to excite it,* 278. *Considerations proper, ib. Motives to love him,* 278---280. *How to shew our Love.* 281, & seq.  
*Love to the Members of Christ, how to be express'd.* 285  
*Love to God.* 337  
*Lying Evil of it, and Dissuasives from it.* 492, 494

## M.

- M***An, distinguish'd in his Creation, and how,* 22, 123.  
*An admirable Creature, Nexus utriusque Mundi,* 123. *Constituted Lord of the Earth,* 37. *Eden or Paradise made for his Delight, ibid. Wants something there to complete his Happiness,* 40. *Law he received. See Law. Greatness and Penalty of his Transgression,* 39. *Since the Fall in a Kind of Death-State,* 205. *And exposed to Sorrows innumerable,* 207. *May be defined Animale religiosum.* 653  
*Mankind, reducible to two Sorts here, and two States hereafter,* 25  
*Master, Christ the Christians,* 429. *A rightful and well qualified Master, ibid. To be owned exclusively of others, and of all Things,* 431. *He is ipse dixit sufficient to determine Belief and Practice.* 432  
*Meals, Christians, to behave religiously at them.* 404  
*Means, of effectual Calling.* 310  
*Meditation, described,* 95. *Proved a Duty,* 96. *Subjects proper for it, many,* 99. *These to be chose before-hand, and a Number to be kept by us, ibid. Besides which occasional ones will offer,* 102. *Allowable to reflect on several successively, but best to keep to one,* 101. *Having the Subject how to proceed,* 101, and 297. *Not to be careless as to Method, yet not over nice,* 105. *Concerning the writing of one's Meditation,* 558. *Of that which is more*  
 Y y 3 set



# INDEX.

|                                                                                      |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| set and solemn, 104. <i>And of extemporary, 559. Divers Specimens of both Sorts.</i> |     |
| Men, good and bad, <i>their different Conditions here, 5. Hereafter.</i>             | 479 |
| Metaphors, <i>to represent the heavenly Happiness.</i>                               | 204 |
| Ministers, <i>to be much in their Oratories, and why.</i>                            | 670 |
| Mortification, <i>the Grace of God in the Soul, a prevailing Principle of it.</i>    | 339 |

## N.

|                                                                                                              |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>N</b> aked, <i>when Christians walk so, and others see their Shame, 408. Reflection on this Humbling.</i> | 410 |
| Nakedness, <i>of our first Parents, wherein thought to consist.</i>                                          | 184 |
| New Creature, <i>at first like an Embryo.</i>                                                                | 339 |

## O.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>O</b> bedience, <i>to Christ's Commands, the Test of Love to him, 285. One powerful Motive to it, the Death of Christ, 296. Divine Grace in the Soul, a Principle of universal Obedience, 342. Not worthless, and useless, tho' defective, 414. To beware of those who speak against it, as denying it, 416. See Holiness, Righteousness and Good Works.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |     |
| Obligations, <i>ours to Christ, 296. And to the Grace of God. 302</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |     |
| Oratory Christian, <i>concerning the Place of it, 12—15. How to be furnish'd with Books, 13. Work of it either ordinary and stated, or extraordinary and occasional, 17. Ordinary and stated what, 17, &amp; seq. Reading the Scripture. Vide Reading. Meditation. See Meditation. Self-Examination. See Self-Examination. Prayer. See Prayer. Not necessary to go through the whole Work every Time we retire, for Reasons given, 646. But many may often attend the Whole, if it be not their own Fault, 648. Should endeavour to go thro' the whole ordinarily once a Day, or twice a Week, 649. Reply to an Objection.</i> | 650 |

## P.

|                                                                                                                                                                                         |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>P</b> aradise, <i>Derivation and Signification of the Word. 200 Whether it denotes the same as third Heaven, 198. See Heaven.</i>                                                    | 200 |
| Parents, <i>their Duty as to educating their Children, 448, &amp;c.</i>                                                                                                                 |     |
| Paul the Apostle, <i>What extraordinary in his Conversion, 308, 315. All not converted as he was, 318. His Satisfaction as to his being so, was more from the Effects than from the</i> | the |

# INDEX.

- the Manner and Circumstances, 317, 324, 333. Probably had the Gospel revealed to him whilst at Damascus, without Sight, 318. A constant Advocate for Grace, 314. His Rapture. 197, &c.
- Philosophers, Heathen, Enemies to the Doctrine of the Resurrection. 158
- Praising God. 487, & seq.
- Prayer, necessary Duty of the Closet, 589, & seq. Particulars explaining it, and directing as to the Management of it, 590. Certain great Essentials requisite of all acceptable Prayer, 590. In secret we may take greater Liberty, and should have especial Respect to present Circumstances, 591—593. Extemporary fittest for the Closet: What Advantages this has above Forms, 595. Of the Method and Parts of Prayer, 600—603. A Specimen exhibiting the Whole in its several Parts and Order, 604, & seq. Not necessary to go through every Part always, nor to confine ourselves to one uniform Method, 603, 617. The most perfect Manner of praying above Forms, and Rules of Method, 618. Can't pray acceptably but by Help and Influence of the Spirit, 622, & seq. Motives to quicken to the Duty, 629. Of Frequency in it, 641. To be performed twice a Day, 643. And oftner, 644. The first Effort of Grace in the Soul is usually by Prayer. 335
- Preachers, not Religious, to be attended on, and may do good. 553
- Preaching, what, most to be valued. 471
- Precepts, Difference between negative and positive ones, in regard of Obligation. 648
- Preparation, for Lord's Day, 467. For Sacrament Day. 473
- Presence, of God in Worship, how desirable. 487
- Proseuchæ, what, Jewish Prayer-Houses. Some Account of these from Prideaux and Mede, whether different from Synagogues, and how. 3, & seq. and 17
- Prosperity, God and his Providence to be owned herein. 385
- Providence, how dark the Heathens were about it, 394. Doctrine and Scheme of it laid down in Scripture, *ibid.* Properties of it as here represented, 395. Of the special Conduct of it in respect of temporal Affairs, 388. To whom this afforded, and how, 389—391. Of duly owning and conversing with God in Providences, 383, 445. This urged in several Particulars, 384. A considerable Argument of a religious devout Temper, 382. Nothing of that found in the Profane and Carnal, 383. Should be content, seeing our Condition is ordered by Divine Providence, 395. Its seemingly unequal Distributions, an Evidence of a State hereafter. 126, 127

# INDEX.

|                                                                                                                                                                             |          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Psalms, <i>not human Composures</i> , 34. <i>Of what Use to consider the Penman, and Occasion</i> , 33, 43. <i>The second wrote by David, and on what Occasion</i> .        | 34       |
| Psalmody, <i>considered as a Duty of the Closet, not merely mental Singing understood by this, but Singing with a low suppressed Voice. What Composures to use herein</i> . | 633, 634 |
| Purgatory, <i>Austims, what</i> .                                                                                                                                           | 118      |
| Purity.                                                                                                                                                                     | 337      |

## R.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>R</b> eading the Scripture, <i>Romanists to blame for prohibiting it</i> , 17. <i>A Part of daily Closet Religion</i> , 18. <i>Directions for it</i> , 18—70. <i>Pressed on all</i> , 93—95. <i>And Arguments brought to enforce it</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 70—95       |
| Redemption, <i>Price paid for it</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 127         |
| Regeneration, <i>includes more than is done for us in Baptism</i> . 332                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |             |
| Religion, <i>how preserved in Life and Vigour</i> , 167. <i>All Success and Attainments in it to be ascribed to the Assistance of the Spirit</i> , 379. <i>How it is with those who have made considerable Progress in it</i> , 344. <i>The Foundation of Happiness</i> , 25                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |             |
| Repentance, <i>what</i> , 419. <i>Is twofold, original, habitual</i> , ib. <i>The last a Duty as long as we live, is the same with Poverty of Spirit</i> , 420. <i>Peculiarly acceptable to God</i> , ibid. <i>What is the Foundation of it, whence it arises, and wherein it shews itself</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                                | 420, & seq. |
| Resolutions, <i>divers pious ones, supposed to be taken up in Contemplation of Death</i> , 117. <i>Immortality of the Soul</i> , 142.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |             |
| Resurrection, 190. <i>And heavenly Glory</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 255         |
| Resurrection, <i>what included in the Notion of it</i> , 145, & seq. <i>Properties of the Resurrection-Body. See Body. Proofs of it</i> , 158—171. <i>Objections against it considered</i> , 173, & seq. <i>Doctrine of it improv'd for Instruction</i> , 179—184. <i>Comfort</i> , 185, & seq. <i>Quickening</i> , 190, & seq. <i>Of the Good, why scarce any other mentioned but this</i> , 190. <i>That of the Wicked will be a Punishment</i> , ibid. <i>Day. Its Solemnity and Glory</i> . | 183         |
| Retirement, <i>Christians should accustom themselves to it, and delight in it</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 676         |
| Reverence, <i>due in reading the Scripture</i> , 63. <i>In God's House and Worship</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 461         |
| Rule, <i>good Men not our Rule</i> , 434. <i>But the Divine Law</i> , 257. <i>This considerable two Ways, as first given to Man in Innocency, or as given afterwards upon a Change in his Circumstances</i> , ibid. <i>Distinguishable into the Law of Sincerity and Evangelical Perfection</i> , 258. <i>See Law</i> .                                                                                                                                                                         |             |
| Rule, <i>our Saviour's, of doing as we would be done to, an admirable</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | mirable     |



# INDEX.

*mirable and Golden One*, 496. *Observations upon it, and Explanations*, 496, 497. *Its Extent and Cases wherein it apply it*, 498, & seq.

## S.

- S**abbath, *its Original and End*, 36. *Kind in God, to institute it*. ibid. and 468
- Saints, *Regards to be shewn to their Bodies when dead*, 181.
- The Increase of their Happiness at the Resurrection*. 183
- Sanctification, *or the Renewing of our Natures necessary to fit us for Devotion*, 675. *The End of all the Spirit's Assistances and Operations, and of all God's Designs and Acts towards the Church*. 377
- Satisfaction, *the Notion of it*. 268
- Scripture, *its Authority*. See *Authority, and Word of God*. *Its Excellency shewn*, 79--85. *Usefulness of it to all the Purposes of the Christian Life, and all the Varieties of his Case*, 87, &c. *What to have the Heart impressed with it*. See *Heart*. *Encomiums bestowed upon it by ancient Writers*, 89, 90. *All useful but not equally*, 18. *The Sense and not the Sound of Words is Scripture*. 20
- Self-Abasement. 422
- Sermons, *to be considered more than Preachers*, 553. *We may and should endeavour to get some Advantage by all we hear*. 470
- Shechinah. 462, 464, 465
- Sin, *its horrid Nature, especially if known and wilful, to be seen in Adam's Transgression*, 39. *To be dreaded and abhorred as the Procuring Cause of Christ's Sufferings*, 294. *How opposed by the Grace of God in the Soul*, 339. *Quite abolished in Heaven*. 209
- Sleeping, *under Sermons and Dulness reprov'd*. 484
- Soliloquies. 141, 380
- Solomon, *the Result of his Enquiries after Happiness in worldly Things*, 206. *Why in the Book of Proverbs, he assumes the Character of a Father, and speaks to his Son*, 399
- Soul, *of a different Original from the Body*, 37. *Nature and Excellency of it*, 122, 229. *Arguments drawn from hence for its Immortality and the future Happiness of good Men*, ib. *Its Salvation a Matter of infinite Consequence*, 292. *What implied in its Returning to God*, 131. *Know not how it acts when separate from the Body*. 202
- Specimens, *of Scripture expounded and applied*, 21--43. *Of Sermons preached over again in private*, 479, & seq. *Of a devotional Exercise for New-Years-Day*, 520. *Of an Exercise*



# INDEX.

- Exercise upon Return from a Journey*, 526. *Of Meditation*, 106, & seq.
- Spirits, the Manner of their Actings upon one another mysterious*, 309. *Instances of departed ones subsisting in a State of Separation, and returning to our World*, 130
- Spirit holy, the Shechinah of the New Testament Church*, 69, 354. *A dangerous Mistake to confine his Office to the first Planting of the Gospel*, 350, 368. *All true Believers and Members of the Christian Church have him*, 351. *Is received to inhabit at the Time of Conversion*, *ibid.* *Does not accomplish all his Work at once, but affords a continual Assistance*, 352. *Supply of him respects every Grace in order to Growth*, *ibid.* *Hereby the Christian is furnished for all his Duties and Difficulties*, 353. *His Help in reading the Scripture, and the Necessity thereof*, 69. *In Prayer*, 623, & seq. *Towards our gaining Assurance*, 572. *Of his extraordinary Assistance in this granted occasionally for special Purposes*, 356, & seq. *Many Disputes have been raised about his Influence*, 367. *But there are certain Conclusions that we may and ought to abide by with respect to this, notwithstanding Difficulty in the Premises. What these are*, 368—377. *All who enjoy the Gospel to pray for him*, 375. *Difference in the Distribution of him, on what it depends*, *ib.* *Is virtually all good Things*, 380. *To be thankful for him, and carry it so as not to grieve him*, 354, 355. *Those animadverted on who neglect his Influence, or but seldom take Notice of it*, 370. *A Soliloquy and Prayer in Reference hereunto*, 380
- Spiritual Mindedness, lies much in observing and improving daily Occurrences, and conversing with God in the Variety of his Providences*, 103
- State, future. See Future.*
- State outward, none here wherein we shall not find something amiss*, 397. *Present may be best for us, tho' not most agreeable*, 396. *Whatever it is 'twill soon have an End*, 397. *These Considerations Arguments for Contentment*, 398
- State, inward and spiritual, we are to come at the Knowledge of it by Self-Examination*, 569. *Must repeat the Work till we have gained Satisfaction about it*, *ibid.* *A main Direction to be observed for that Purpose*, 570. *Of the Hand the Spirit of God has in making known the Goodness of our State*, 572
- State, a Comparison between the present and future in sundry Respects, and the latter shown to be far preferable*, 246

# INDEX.

Strength, of a Christian, whence it arises, and wherein it lies. 411

## T.

- T**alents, of different Kinds, 261. To be improved, *ibid.*  
 Temper, of a religious and devout one, 381. This has many Ways of discovering itself: Seen in nothing more than in a constant serious Acknowledging of God in his Providences. *Vide* Providence.  
 Testimonies, of Scripture for the Soul's Immortality and a future State, 129. For the Resurrection, 164. Happiness of Heaven, 234. What Weight the Apostle Paul's Testimony concerning the last should have with us. 238  
 Thoughts, Love to Christ to be manifested by them, and how. 281  
 Time, Improvement of it, a Matter of utmost Consequence, Expedients and Helps proper in order hereunto. 436, & seq.  
 Times, of Closet Devotion, no precise Hours appointed by God, 635. We are not told how oft to retire, 641. Yet a Frequency is to be in our Devotion, particularly Prayer. *Vide* Prayer. Most convenient Times to be chosen, 644. And as much as may be kept to, 645. Of special Seasons and Occasions for Retirement. 645  
 Trinity, its Mode not to be fully understood. 431  
 Truth, of speaking it in the Heart. 490

## V.

- V**anity, in all worldly Things. 206  
 Vocation, effectual. See Call.  
 Union, that between Soul and Body, and the mutual Influence resulting from it, a Mystery. 308  
 Virtue, of resolute Virtue, 433. Several Things requisite to it. 434, 435

## W.

- W**alking, with God. 661, 400.  
 Warfare, between Sin and Grace in the Souls of the Regenerate, represented, Rom. vii.  
 Watchfulness, a Duty of universal Concernment often enjoined, and of great Extent, 407. In what Things the Christians Watch to be employed, 408. And for what Purposes. *ibid.*  
 Weanedness, from the World, Christians to be endeavouring after it, 262, 246. Considerations to promote it. 425  
 Wicked,

# I N D E X.

- Wicked, *would find no Heaven in Heaven*, 246. *Whether to pray.* 590
- Will, *cannot be forced; a Contradiction to assert this, nor is it determined by mere physical Power, without Arguments or Conviction*, 309. *Direct immediate Influences upon it not denied.* 310
- Word of God, *of much Consequence to prize and study it*, 25  
*Should labour to be thoroughly established in the Belief of the Scriptures so*, 79, 80. *Arguments to prove it.* 80, & seq.
- Work of Heaven, *what, and how pleasurable.* 221
- Work of Grace, *most infallible Evidences of it.* 338
- Works, good, *strange that any should depreciate them who are acquainted with the Bible*, 413. *Those who do it blamed*, 378. *The Necessity of them, and their proper Place*, *ibid.*  
*Whence depreciating them proceeds, and the Reasons hereof assigned*, 413. *Whether 'tis ascribing too much to them to say, Men shall not be proceeded with and rewarded according to them.* 259
- World, *not designed for our Portion and Happiness*, 113. *Can not be so. See Happiness. May learn Indifferency towards it, and to condemn its Poms and Pleasures from Christ's Crucifixion.* 295
- Worship, *secret, Duty of it proved.* 653, & seq.  
 ——— *Publick, great Account to be made of it*, 469. *The Pleasure of it in Prospect and Review*, 476. *Things necessary to promote this Temper.* 477

## Z.

- Z**eal, *what is an Evidence of Love to Christ*, 284. *That of young Converts more confined at first to their own spiritual Concerns, afterwards more extended as they grow in Grace.* 343
- Zeal Party, *how it discovers itself.* 515

20 MA 59

F I N I S.







BOOKS printed for JOHN GRAY, at  
the Cross-Keys in the Poultry, near  
Cheapside.

**T**HE Credibility of the Gospel History : Or the Facts occasionally mentioned in the *New Testament*, confirmed by Passages of Ancient Authors, who were contemporary with our Saviour, or his Apostles, or lived near their Times. With an Appendix concerning the Time of *Herod's* Death. By NATHANIEL LARDNER. The Second Edition with Additions, 8vo. Price 6 s. N. B. *The Additions are given Gratis to them who are possessed of the former Edition.*

A Vindication of Three of our Blessed Saviour's Miracles, viz. The Raising of *Jairus's Daughter*, the *Widow of Naim's Son*, and *Lazarus*. In Answer to the Objections of Mr. *Woolston's* Fifth Discourse on the Miracles of our Saviour. By the same Author. The Second Edition, 8vo. Price 1 s. 6 d.

The Excellency and Advantage of the Gospel Dispensation; compared with the *Law of Moses*, the *Light of Nature*, the *Inventions of Men*, and the *Dominion of Sin*: Being more especially intended as a Caveat against Infidelity, by shewing the great Expediency and Usefulness of Revelation, and the peculiar Excellency of the Christian Revelation; in a Way consistent with the general Goodness of God. By ROBERT EMMS, Price 1 s.

A Sober and Charitable Disquisition concerning the Importance of the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, particularly with Regard to *Worship* and the *Doctrine of Satisfaction*; endeavouring to shew, that those in the different Schemes should bear with each other in their different Sentiments; nor separate Communions, and cast one another out of Christian Fellowship on this Account. Price 1 s.

Mr. *Oldmixon's* History of *England* during the Reigns of the *Stuarts*; Fol.

The History of the Council of *Constance*, by JAMES L'ENFANT, illustrated with several curious Copper Plates, in Two Vol. 4to.

Miscellanea Sacra, in Two Vol. 8vo.

An Essay on the several Dispensations of God to Mankind in the Order in which they lie in the Bible: Or, A short System of the Religion of Nature and Scripture; with a Preface



## Books printed for JOHN GRAY.

Preface shewing the Causes of the Growth of Infidelity and the likeliest Method to put a Stop to it, 8vo.

1. A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St. *Paul* to the *Colossians*, *Philippians* and *Hebrews*; after the Manner of Mr. *Locke*. To which are annexed several Dissertations on particular Texts of Scripture, 4to.

2. An Essay in Favour of the Ancient Practice of giving the Eucharist to Children, 8vo. Price 2 s. 6 d.

3. Fifteen Sermons on several Occasions, eight of which were never before printed. To which is added, A Scripture Catechism; or the Principles of the Christian Religion laid down in the Words of the Bible, 8vo. Price 4 s. 6 d.

These Three by the late Mr. JAMES PEIRCE of *Exon*.

The Works of Mr. JOSEPH BOYSE of *Dublin*. To which is added: A Funeral Sermon occasioned by his Death, by R. CHOPPIN, *Folio*.

1. The Greatness of Divine Love vindicated, exemplified and displayed in three Letters, 1. Concerning the Possibility of our common Salvation. 2. Concerning the Importance of a firm Belief of it. 3. Concerning God's absolute Decrees of the actual Fall and Misery of Men and Angels. And in a Discourse upon 1 *John* iv. 9. With an Appendix concerning Original Sin. Second Edition. Price 1 s. 6 d.

2. An Essay on Liberty, Grace and Prescience. Pr. 1 s. 6 d.

3. A Letter to the Rev. Mr. JOHN NORMAN; or, A short Review and fair State of the Points in Controversy. Pr. 6 d.

4. An Appendix to the Letter to the Rev. Mr. JOHN NORMAN. Price 2 d.

5. The Apology; or, A Letter to a Friend setting forth the Occasion, Progress and Importance of the present Controversy. Price 4 d.

These Five by SAMUEL FANCOURT.

A Letter in Vindication of God's Prescience of Contingencies upon the Principles of Reason; against the Objections of Mr. *Fancourt* in his late Essay on Liberty, Grace and Prescience. By A. BLISS, A. M. Vicar of *Portsmouth*. Pr. 1 s.

Practical Discourses concerning the Christian Temper: Being Thirty-eight Sermons on the principal Heads of practical Religion, especially as enjoined and enforced by Christianity. By JOHN EVANS, D. D. The Third Edit. in 2 Vol. 8vo.

A Funeral Sermon: Occasioned by the Death of the late Rev. JOHN EVANS, D. D. By WILLIAM HARRIS, D. D.

Twelve Discourses on several Occasions. By JOSEPH DOBSON, M. A. 8vo. Some

## Books printed for JOHN GRAY.

Some Observations on the Present State of the Dissenting Interest, and the Case of those who have lately deserted it. Price 6d.

The Evidence for our Saviour's Resurrection considered, with the Improvement of this important Doctrine. By HENRY GROVE. Price 1s.

Some Thoughts concerning the Proofs of a future State from Reason: Occasion'd by a Discourse of the Rev. Mr. Joseph Hallet, Jun. on the same Subject. By HENRY GROVE. Price 2s.

A Sermon preach'd at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr. Thomas Amory and Mr. William Cornish. In which among other things the true Notion of *Preaching Christ* and the *Decay* of the *Dissenting Interest* are briefly considered; with a large Preface concerning the Foundations of Morality and the excellent Morals of the Gospel. By the same Author. To which is added, A Charge delivered on the same Occasion. By JOHN MILNER. Price 1s.

A General View of Religion. Price 1s.

An Introduction to the Reading of the Holy Scriptures, intended chiefly for Young Students in Divinity. Written originally in *French* by Mef. De Beausobre and L'Enfant, and done into *English*, with Additional Notes, 4to.

A New Version of St. Matthew's Gospel, by the same Authors, 4to.

The Three following by the late Mr. JOHN HOWE, M.A. and sometime Fellow of *Magdalen College, Oxon.*

1. The Office and Work of the Holy Spirit in every Age, with Reference to particular Persons; considered in several Sermons on *John* iii. 6. and *Gal.* v. 25. Published by WILLIAM HARRIS, D. D. 8vo.

2. The prosperous State of the Christian Interest before the End of Time, by a plentiful Effusion of the Holy Spirit; considered in Fifteen Sermons on *Ezek.* xxxix. 29. Published by the late JOHN EVANS, D. D. 8vo.

3. The Obligations from Nature and Revelation to Family Religion and Worship, represented and pressed in six Sermons. Published by the same Author in 8vo. and 12mo.

The Life of Mr. John Howe. By EDMUND CALAMY, D. D. 8vo.

An Abridgment and Continuation of Mr. Baxter's Life and Times, in 4 Vol. 8vo. By the same AUTHOR.

*Arrian's History of Alexander the Great*, translated from the Greek; with Notes historical, geographical and critical. To which is prefixed, A Criticism on *Q. Curtius*, and some Remarks on Mr. *Perizonius's* Vindication of that Author. In Two Vol. 8vo. The

## Books printed for JOHN GRAY.

The Arts of Logick and Rhetorick, illustrated by Examples taken out of the best Authors ancient and modern, in all the polite Languages; interpreted and explained from that learned and judicious Critick Father *Bouhours*. To which are added, Barallel Quotations out of the most eminent *English* Authors in Verse and Prose: Wherein the like Observations are made on their Beauties and Blemishes, in all the various Kinds of Thought and Expression, 8vo.

The Laws of Poetry, 8vo.

A New Miscellany of Original Poems by the most eminent Hands. Published by Mr. *Ralph*, 12mo.

Three Letters to the Deists. By JOHN REYNOLDS, 8vo.

A Practical Discourse on the Reconciliation between God and Man. By the same Author. With a recommendatory Preface. By ISAAC WATTS, D.D. 8vo.

A Supplement to *Plutarch*: Or the Lives of several ancient and illustrious Men, omitted by the Author. Faithfully extracted from the *Greek* and *Latin* Historians. By THOMAS ROWE. With a Preface. By SAMUEL CHANDLER, 8vo.

Verses on several Occasions. By J. EARLE, D.D. 12mo.

Umbritii Cantiani Poemata, 12mo.

A Practical Grammar of the *Latin* Tongue, 8vo.

A Dissertation on the Nature of Heresy. Price 6d.

A Catechism: Or, An Instruction in the Christian Religion. By Way of Question and Answer. Price 6d.

1. Cassiodori Senatoris Complexiones in Acta Apostolorum, Epistolas, & Apocalypsim, 12mo.

2. Reflections on the Conduct of the Modern Deists, 8vo. Price 2s.

3. Doing Good recommended from the Example of our Saviour: A Sermon preached in *Gravel-lane, Southwark*.

4. Knowledge and Practice necessary to Happiness: A Sermon preached in the *Old Jury*.

5. A Letter to the Rev. Mr. *John Guise*, concerning the Scripture Notion of Preaching Christ. Price 1s.

6. A Second Letter to the Rev. Mr. *John Guise*, on the same Subject. Price 1s.

These Six by SAMUEL CHANDLER, and speedily will be published by the same Author.

*Limborch's* History of the Inquisition; Translated into *English* and adorned with several Copper-Plates, in Two Volumes, 4to. To which will be prefixed, A large Introduction containing the History of Persecution.

